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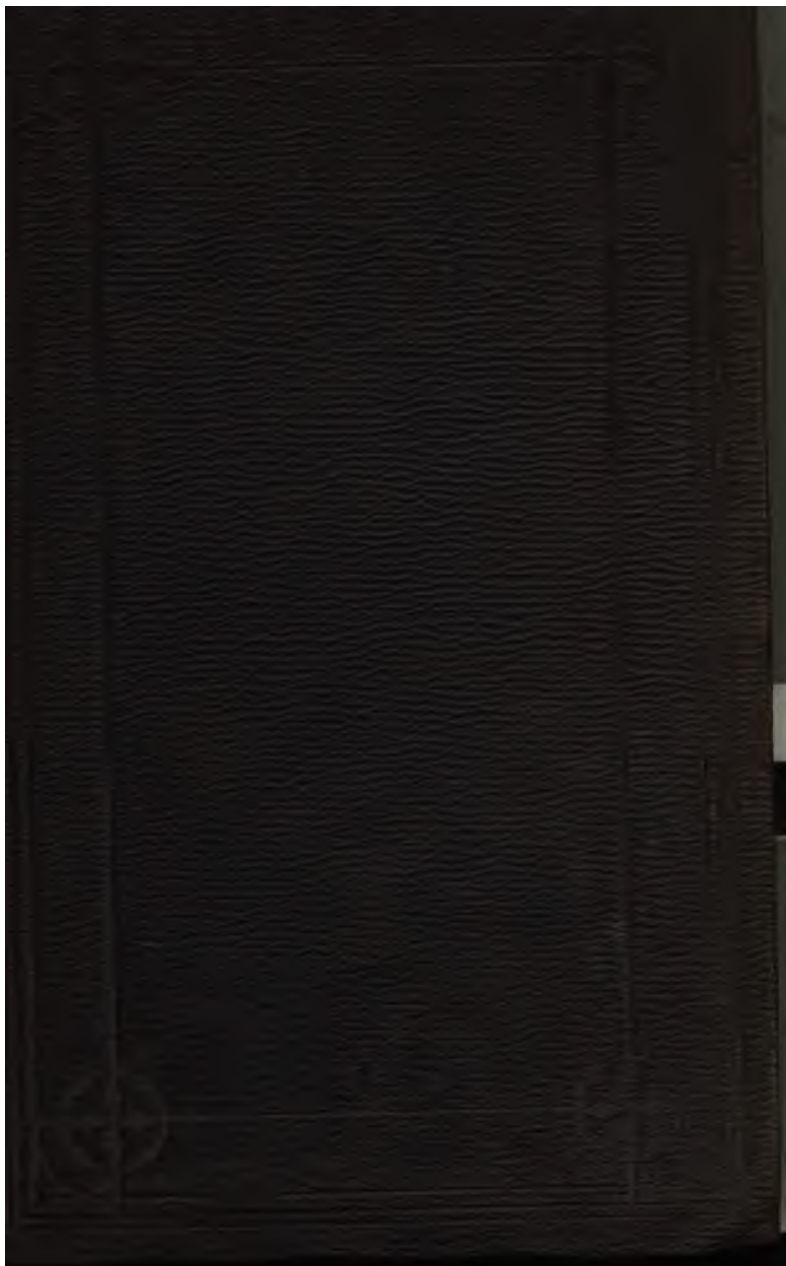
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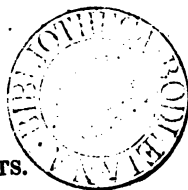




THE
GREAT TRUTHS
OF
The Christian Religion.

N. B. 10.

IN FIVE PARTS.



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P R E F A C E.

THE *substance* of the following pages was printed for private circulation among friends some years ago, under the title of "Plain Truths." The book gained a wider circulation than was expected, and amongst others, it fell into the hands of the late Vicar of S. Mary Church, the Rev. Henry Newland, who strongly urged the writer to recast the work into its present form, giving at the same time many valuable hints, and offering, when the time came, to overlook the pages as they went through the press. Several delays occurred to postpone the carrying out of this plan. The chiefest and foremost were the long illness and the somewhat sudden death of Mr. Newland. After this the thought of publishing was for a time altogether abandoned, when, at the en-

treaty of friends, the writer began once more to prepare for press, gathering together the many memoranda which had been so kindly given by the Vicar of S. Mary Church, and at the same time begging me to undertake the task which was to have been done by my lamented friend.

I beg then to commend this little manual most heartily to all Church people ; especially to the use of those, forming I believe a large number, who are apt to complain that in visiting the poor they know not exactly what to say, and who shrink from venturing to explain in their own words the teaching of the Church. Here they will find the vital doctrines of the Church clearly and forcibly set forth. The book can be purchased as a whole, or in separate parts for distribution as tracts amongst the poor. My sincere hope and prayer to God is, that He will vouchsafe His blessing upon a work, humbly designed for the enlightenment of the poor and for the building up of CHRIST'S Church. Oh, that it might again be seen *by men in England*, (once known throughout

Christendom as the "Isle of Saints,") what is a Christian Church living the life of grace !

W. U. R.

ALL SAINTS CLERGY HOUSE,
Easter, 1862.

O GOD, THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, OUR ONLY SAVIOUR, THE PRINCE OF PEACE ; GIVE US GRACE SERIOUSLY TO LAY TO HEART THE GREAT DANGERS WE ARE IN BY OUR UNHAPPY DIVISIONS. TAKE AWAY ALL HATRED AND PREJUDICE, AND WHATSOEVER ELSE MAY HINDER US FROM GODLY UNION AND CONCORD : THAT, AS THERE IS BUT ONE BODY, AND ONE SPIRIT, AND ONE HOPE OF OUR CALLING, ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM, ONE GOD AND FATHER OF US ALL, SO WE MAY HENCEFORTH BE ALL OF ONE HEART, AND OF ONE SOUL, UNITED IN ONE HOLY BOND OF TRUTH AND PEACE, OF FAITH AND CHARITY, AND MAY WITH ONE MIND AND ONE MOUTH GLORIFY THEE ; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.



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THE GREAT TRUTHS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

THAT IT IS CERTAIN WE ARE NOT SUCH AS GOD
MADE US.

THERE are a great many truths in the Christian Religion, which, we are told, "except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved." It is no matter whether he *understand* them or not—for some of them are quite beyond man's understanding—but he must *believe* them.

This "believing" is what is commonly called Faith. The Bible says, "without faith it is impossible to please God." Heb. xi. 6.

It makes one very sad to think how, in this Christian country, there should be so many people who are ignorant of these "saving

truths"—nay, that there should be some who do not even know Who CHRIST is, or what He has done for the souls of men. In order, if possible, to help any who may be in ignorance of things belonging to their salvation, I will try and explain, in simple language, what these great Truths of our Religion are.

There is no doubt that there are many things in religion hard to understand, and it is a great mercy that God is so good as to be content if we take them on His word and believe them, even if we cannot comprehend them. But before we can *believe* we must *know* about them, for it is written in the Bible, "How shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" Rom. x. 14.

Now we must take care lest we run into a common error, and think we cannot be religious unless we are good scholars. This is quite a mistake. Many an unlearned person may yet be an excellent Christian, and many a saint has gone to heaven to dwell with our dear LORD and His holy angels, who never knew how to read or write. Being a scholar has nothing to do with being religious or going

to heaven, for, as I said before, God does not require of us Learning, but Faith. This should comfort those who have but little human wisdom. Still, we must not sit with our hands before us, doing nothing for ourselves and expecting God to do all. We have each of us a work to do in this life, of some sort or other, and we are bound to find this out and to do it. There was an old saying of a great saint, who lived many hundred years ago, that "God made man without himself, but would not save him without himself"—meaning, that we must study to know God's will, and rule our lives accordingly, and walk in the way of His commandments, if we would live with Him hereafter in heaven. That is what the Bible means by "working out our own salvation." Let none therefore grieve if he have but little *human* learning, but, at the same time, let no man purposely keep himself out of the way of *religious* knowledge, for we shall all have to give account, and if we have wasted our opportunities, God will require it at our hands.

Every Christian should be eager and anxious to learn how he may be saved, to know about JESUS, and to be taught how he may best

please God and "inherit eternal life." It should be the one great affair of our lives to find out the sure road to heaven ; and it is for this reason that I am so desirous you should learn what your belief as a Christian should be, and what that "faith" is "which was once delivered to the saints" (S. Jude 3)—that faith for which our forefathers the Christians of old days were content to lay down their lives.

I must begin by telling you that when our LORD JESUS CHRIST was upon earth, He sent out His messengers to preach the Gospel of salvation. The word "gospel" means "good news." The Apostles, CHRIST'S twelve chosen friends, were the first messengers. The "good news" they brought was this, that CHRIST, the GOD-man, had purchased "SALVATION" for all men. They were also commissioned to teach them the *way* to be saved—how they might belong to CHRIST. God is no less merciful to us in these latter days, than He was to them of old time, for He still sends His messengers to bring us these "glad tidings." The "good news" is for *us* as well as for *them*, for GOD would have "all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. ii. 4.

In the present day we call these "messengers" by the name of BISHOPS and PRIESTS, a name that has come down to us from the times of the Apostles. They are sent by God, and they speak to us with authority in God's Name, and we are bound to listen to them, because God teaches us by their mouth. The Bible calls them "stewards of the mysteries" of God, for, like stewards, their duty is to feed CHRIST'S flock, and to give them their "meat in due season." They are sent forth to minister to us, as the Apostles were of old, and they have a heavenly commission to teach and to preach, which they receive from God; Who gives them of His HOLY SPIRIT, and says of them in the Bible, as you may read, S. Luke x. 16, "He that heareth you, heareth Me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me." Moreover He has promised to be with them "always, even unto the end of the world." S. Matt. xxviii. 20.

Now God's Priests, who teach us, and we who listen to their voice, and receive the message which they bring, and do our Heavenly FATHER'S bidding, are separated from the world, and become what is called the "CHURCH." The meaning of the word

“Church” is “God’s lot,” or “God’s people”—the elect or chosen.

I daresay you may remember in the second chapter of the Acts of the Holy Apostles, and the forty-seventh verse, that it is said “the LORD added to the CHURCH daily such as should be saved.” This certainly looks very much as if we could not be *sure* of salvation unless we belong to the Church, and are of the number of God’s elect people. We must not go astray after other people, we must belong to the “people of the LORD.” And who are they? what must we do to become His “people” and to belong to Him?

Again, what is the “good news”—the message which God’s ministers bring us from Him? what is it to be saved? and how came we ever to be lost?

These are difficult questions, but as they are very serious ones to all of us, you must give me your full attention, whilst I try and explain them to you; and you must pray too, for God’s Grace to help you to understand them for without that, we should try in vain to take into our minds any of the revelations of God.

Now, in the first place, we may be quite sure that God did not create us as we are no

If you look to Genesis i. 31, you will see that it is expressly said, "God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very *good*," and we are certainly *not* "very good."

Whence come all those evil passions which trouble us; those temptations to do wrong; that fierce anger, which is akin to madness; that hatred, which is so like murder; those wicked words and oaths; that fearful drunkenness which we see in our streets? What makes people thieve and lie, and envy and slander each other? What causes those sinful lusts of the flesh, which poison our domestic life? There must be (to use a common expression) a "screw loose somewhere." There must be *something* wrong at work in us, to produce such bad and corrupt fruits. There *is* indeed—and that wrong thing is, *sin*. Sin is at the root of all evil; sin has got into the world by man's own fault, and so it comes to pass that "in our flesh dwelleth no good thing." Even those who are trying to be good, find the truth of what S. Paul says, that to will is present with us, but how to perform that which is good we find not (Rom. vii.); for when we *would* do good, evil is present with us, and hinders us.

Well might the wise man say (Eccles. vii. 29), "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." We are tempted, and we yield; and though few of us actually *like* sin, yet we live in it, and become slaves to it, because our nature, we say, is so weak that we cannot resist temptation.

It is because of this that men tremble when they come to think of death, and shudder at the idea of hell-fire. They know they are not fit to come into the Presence of Almighty God, and they are frightened at the thought of it. But it was not always so. When God made man, He made him pure and righteous. Every passion was well regulated then, and in subjection to the will of his Maker. There was no rebellion then, his will was one with God's will.

" He knew not sin, he knew not death,
When first on earth he stood;
God's Spirit gave him living breath,
And he was 'very good.' "

Man was created "upright," and formed in the image of God Himself, but man *unmade* himself, and by the sin of disobedience fell

from his high estate, and GOD ceased to delight in him, as He had heretofore done, or to declare him to be "very good."

Now, in order to explain to you how man fell from his first estate, and how human nature came to be so corrupt and miserable as we see it to be, and why we need a SAVIOUR to bring us to GOD, and set us at one with Him again; I must go back to the very beginning of all things—the creation of the world.

CHAPTER II.

HOW SIN CAME INTO THE WORLD.

WE all know, though, I suppose, very few of us can take it in, on account of the feebleness of our human understanding, that the great and good GOD, the Maker of the world, *never* had a beginning. There never was a time when He did not rule over everything, and order everything, and of His kingdom there will be no end. Not only has He made everything, but He can do anything. And the most blessed truth of all is, that He loves us His poor creatures "with an everlasting love." Jer. xxxi. 3. Although we be sinful

and fallen, and He so great a GOD and so far above us, yet does He bid us call Him FATHER, and treat us as His children.

By-and-by I shall have more to say to you of the nature and goodness of GOD, but now I must relate to you how this great and good GOD—Who never had a beginning, and will never have an end—a great many years ago—nearly six thousand—made this world in which we live. He did it by the word of His mouth. “He spake, and it was done: He commanded, and it stood fast.” Ps. xxxiii. 9.

And then He created the first man and woman, ADAM and EVE, and indued them with many excellent gifts, both of body and soul, making them in His own image and after His own likeness. See Gen. i. 26. He gave them for their habitation a beautiful garden, called “PARADISE,” full of lovely flowers and fruits, and trees and shrubs. There was nothing wanting to make them perfectly happy; they could not doubt their Heavenly FATHER’S love, Who had poured such rich benefits upon them, and He only asked in return their loving obedience.

One might have thought that obedience would have been easy, for He gave them but

one commandment, and it *seemed* a small one, and one that might have been easily kept. It was this. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Gen. ii. 16, 17. By this command and warning, God meant man to understand that His Wisdom was enough for him, that it would be sure to lead him to all good, and guard him from all evil; and that he must not be judging for himself what was good or what was bad for him. It was just as if God had said, "My grace is sufficient for thee"—seek nothing beyond it—let it suffice you. But, alas! Adam and Eve were tempted to pride; they were tempted to exalt themselves against God, and so they *fell*. It was on this wise. There is a wicked spirit called Satan, or the Devil. He was once an angel of light, but he fell from his first state, having rebelled against God, and attempted to exalt himself against his Maker, and so God cast him, with all his evil companions, out of heaven, for in heaven no sinful thing can possibly dwell. Now this bad spirit hates the good God, and seeks to

oppose Him in all things, though his power is not without limit, for he can only do what God suffers him to do. He hated Adam and Eve, because God delighted in them. He was jealous of mankind. He had himself once enjoyed the light of God's Countenance, and was then, as now, shut out from it, and lived in that dreadful state of hatred and misery and despair, into which all must be plunged who are separated from God. Malice and envy raged in his heart, as he saw others enjoying that favour and love of the ALMIGHTY, which he had once possessed, and had thrown away. And so Satan sought to ruin man, and to bring him to that place of torment where he himself dwells.

It is true that God is Almighty, and that the Devil could not *then*—any more than he can *now*—do aught beyond what God permits; but God *did* permit Satan to tempt man, in order to prove whether man were really deserving of the favour and indulgence which He had shown him. The evil spirit was allowed to *try* and persuade man to disobey his Maker. And here I would remark that the Devil is very crafty, which makes him the more dangerous. He tried the woman Eve first,

because he thought she would be the weakest. He told her that she should *not* "surely die," even if she did eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree, but that, on the contrary, she and her husband "should be as Gods, knowing good and evil." He "beguiled" her, to use the words of Holy Scripture, and she yielded, and *did eat*, and so disobeyed the command of God; and she did worse, for she persuaded her husband to eat also.

Oh, if our first parents could but have known the evil they were bringing upon all the world by that one act of disobedience! Through it sin was let into the world, and death by sin, as we read in Rom. v. 12. Alas! had it not been for sin, there had been neither sorrow nor suffering, grief nor tears. Above all, there would have been no DEATH; we might have lived here in peace, praising and blessing God, and passed away to heaven, like Enoch, Heb. xi. 5; or Elijah, 2 Kings ii. 11, without struggle, pain, or fear.

And here we must remember that Adam and Eve *might* have resisted this temptation if they had chosen to use the powers God had given them; just as *we* may resist when Satan tempts *us* to sin. Holy Scripture expressly

tells us this, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (S. James iv. 7.) If they had resisted, and called upon God to aid them, He would not have been deaf to their cry; He never is deaf to the voice of those who call upon Him for help and strength in the time of need,—but they did not. On the contrary, they forgot God, and thought only of themselves. They wanted to be wise and strong. The wisdom and strength of God were not sufficient for them. They wished to be independent, and to have it of their own—in short, to be equal with God, to be "as God." They did not know that knowledge without goodness is a curse, and not a blessing. And so by pride they fell, and by disobedience they separated themselves from God, and drew down upon themselves and upon the whole human race the punishment of death; and this we call the "FALL of MAN." We know not exactly *what* gifts man had originally, or what he lost by his fall; but we know this, that from that hour, a great change took place—a miserable change! Our nature became corrupt, our will became rebellious against God.

A change wrought, too, in so few moments!

How much evil can be done in a few minutes ! And now, alas ! human nature prefers the rule of Satan to that of God. Once it was pure and free, delighting in God, rejoicing in His presence, loving Him, trusting Him, looking upon Him as a Father ; and now,—behold, the creatures whom He made are afraid of Him, and hide themselves amongst the trees of the garden, (Gen. iii. 8), and are ashamed to meet Him, for sin and shame are nearly akin. Let us see what this great change in man after the fall was.

Did you ever let a watch fall ? You took it up, and it did not seem perhaps very different from what it was before. It *seemed* to go, the hands moved, and you heard the tick. It looked much the same before and after its fall ; but there was this difference—*it would not keep time*. One day it was too fast, another it was too slow. Then it would stop all of a sudden—you would try and put it right, but in a few hours it would be all wrong again. You could not *trust* it any longer—it had ceased to answer the purpose for which it was made. And so with Adam. He did not probably at once perceive the *fulness* of the change which had come over him after the

Fall; he did not know *all* that had befallen him. He knew that he had disobeyed God, and that God was angry with him, and had said he should die; but as yet he knew not what death and hell meant.

Adam and Eve were turned out of Paradise, and came by *degrees* to learn in a life of labour and suffering, how far both they and their children were from what they *might* and *ought* to have been.

It came out in the envy and jealousy of Cain and the murder of Abel, and sin went on increasing until we read in the sixth chapter of Genesis, fifth verse, that "God saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." How different from the time when he was created in the image of God, and when God looked on him, as He did upon all the works of His hands, and pronounced him to be "very good!"

Do you not now see why man in his *natural* state (since the Fall) is prone to sin? how he is born in sin, and is by *nature* a "child of wrath," because he is a child of Adam? And so it has been ever since. Sin continued to progress until the time when God sent

a flood upon the earth, because of offences, (and destroyed every living creature, save Noah and his family), and is going on even to this day.

We are all prone to go wrong, like a watch that has been injured by falling. I don't mean that we are always sinning, but we are *disposed* to sin. "The wickedness of man has spoilt the work of God." We have not altogether lost the consciousness of God. A trace of His image remains, but our nature is wrong; we can't be trusted; in time of temptation we fall away.

Now we have seen that man has fallen from his first condition, that there is a stain upon him, and that God's workmanship is marred. The question is, how may man recover his lost estate, how wipe away the stain, how be restored to God's favour, and made fit to inherit the kingdom of heaven? Who shall reconcile him to God Almighty? Who restore him the image and the beauty which he has lost? Who get back for him the grace of God which was forfeited by sin, and obtain for him the power and strength to do right and to live holily?

Liars and drunkards, nay, sinners of *any* kind, cannot be received into heaven. There

shall nothing enter there, we are told, "that defileth," but only such as are written in "the book of life"—such as keep the commandments of God. Indeed, people living in wilful sin would hardly *wish* to go to heaven. How could *they* desire to appear in the Presence of God, laden with all their sins? They would rather hide themselves, if they could, from His sight, as did Adam and Eve after their disobedience, behind the trees of the garden. We are told in the Bible, that at the last day of awful judgment, sinners will in despair seek to hide themselves from the Presence of God Almighty, and will call upon the rocks to fall upon them, rather than meet their most justly offended Maker. In heaven the employment of the blessed is to praise God continually. How could people living in wilful sin do that? They would not know how; or if they did, it would only be a weariness to them. They would not like it, or you may be sure they would begin to do it here. Let us consider, then, if there be any way by which mankind may be *created anew*, set free from all these evil consequences of sin, lifted up again from the dust, and reconciled to God Almighty.

CHAPTER III.

IS THERE NO DELIVERANCE FROM SIN AND DEATH?

WE have seen that man by nature is prone to sin, and that the thoughts of his heart are evil. I have endeavoured to explain how we inherit this propensity from Adam. It is what is called "ORIGINAL SIN." Our passions and inclinations are (since the fall), by *nature*, evil. They are distorted and are out of course. They need to be set right. Moreover the "wages of sin is death."

GOD warned Adam that if he disobeyed His commands, he should "surely die." Unless *we* keep God's commands, and unless we can get rid of that curse and stain of "ORIGINAL SIN," which we inherit from Adam, and which makes us hateful in God's sight, Who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity," (Hab. i. 13), we must also die; not only the death which is common to man, but the *eternal* death in hell—shut out from the light of God's Presence for ever; which is really too dreadful to think of.

The question, then, is, how can we avoid this fearful alternative? and so we come to those

“GOOD TIDINGS” of which I have already spoken. For the only message of gladness to one who is lost, must be, that he may be saved. The “good tidings” to *us* must needs be this; that there is a means by which we may be reconciled to God, and overcome our evil nature—a way of becoming pleasing in our Maker’s sight, getting rid of the curse and penalty of sin, and being restored to a state of goodness. It is true we cannot *remake* ourselves, or set ourselves right. The injured watch must needs pass through the hands of its maker, in order to be restored to its first condition. No amount of time or efforts of its own could repair the injury it has sustained. It could not mend itself. And so, in like manner, man must undergo some process by which he may be made fit to stand in God’s Presence again as before. He must, as it were, be created anew, “BORN AGAIN,” in righteousness and true holiness, instead of remaining in sin and under a curse.

But how can this be? How can God’s word stand, and yet man be saved? God cannot lie. He has said man must “surely die” for sin. How is death to be averted, and yet God remain true?

Now "guilt cannot be transferred, but punishment can." Man cannot ascend up to God, but God has stooped down to man. He has invented a remedy by which death may be averted. He has accepted a sacrifice for sin, and agreed in His mercy that a PERFECT MAN should bear man's punishment, and restore to him the "glorious liberty of the sons of God," which he had lost. He ordained that ONE Who had never sinned should die for sinners, and save them from eternal death. No mortal man could do this great thing. If *he* had died for his fellows, he would only in dying have done what was appointed for him—would only have suffered his own just punishment, for the "wages of sin is DEATH." A PERFECT SINLESS MAN was needed—one who *need* not have died—who was holy and pleasing to God. The sacrifice must be pure and blameless, for "the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD." Who could this perfect man be, who had never displeased God? He could be none other than the SON of GOD Himself, our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. He offered to become man for our sakes; to be a second Adam, sinless and perfect, yet to

carry our sins, and *suffer* for them, and nail them to His cross.

“ Good news,” indeed, is this, that God the SON should clothe Himself with our poor, weak human nature, in order to restore it to its original beauty and purity ; and so you see “ mercy and truth are met together :” “ righteousness and peace have kissed each other.” God keeps His word, and yet has mercy ; He gives us peace, and yet He ceases not to be righteous and holy ; for He gives us in sacrifice His only-begotten SON, and accepts Him at our hands. Therefore, “ as by one man’s (Adam’s) disobedience, many were made sinners ; so, by the obedience of ONE (our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST), many shall be made righteous.”

Man was under the curse of God’s displeasure, and CHRIST became “ a curse for man.” His life and death were accepted instead of ours. He took our nature upon Him—to make it good again—to repair it—to mend it—to remake it. He took our flesh with all its infirmities and wretchedness — “ yet without sin.” He was not capable of sin, but He suffered all the *penalty* of sin ; and so it came to pass that, “ As in Adam all die, even so in

CHRIST shall all be made alive," 1 Cor. xv. 20. —“ He has made peace through the blood of His cross,” Col. i. 20, and has “tasted death for every man.”

O love! how deep, how broad, how high!
It fills the heart with extasy,
That CHRIST the SON of GOD should take
Our mortal form, for mortals' sake.

He sent no angel to our race,
Of higher or of lower place;
But wore the robe of human frame
Himself, and to this lost world came.

Nor willed He only to appear;
His pleasure was to tarry here;
And the GOD-MAN with man would be
The space of thirty years and three!

Now on this occasion I cannot talk to you of the life of our dear LORD JESUS CHRIST on earth—of His good deeds, and mercy, and kindness to the sick and afflicted—of His deep sympathy—of His meek and gentle ways, and soul-stirring words. It would take volumes to tell even a small part of this, and you may read of it in the Bible for yourselves. The blessed disciple S. John, who wrote one of the Gospels, says, that if all that JESUS said and did whilst He was upon earth should be written, he supposes “even the world itself could

not contain the books that should be written," S. John xxi. 25.

I have tried to show you that the sacrifice of CHRIST is the root of all our good, and the spring and fountain from which flow all our spiritual gifts ; I must next endeavour to show you how to *use* these gifts that are given to you, and apply them to yourselves individually.

We could not mend ourselves, it is true, or remake ourselves ; but CHRIST has so remade and mended our nature, that *in* Him and *through* Him, we can now be what we once could *not* be—pleasing in the sight of God ALMIGHTY. Our LORD JESUS CHRIST, in His human nature, was the first of all the children of Adam upon whom the All Pure God could look with perfect satisfaction. For the first time since the fall could He say, " This is My beloved SON, in Whom I am well pleased ;" and for His sake, God looks favourably on us, because CHRIST has joined Himself to us.

It follows for me to show how we may be joined to CHRIST—that we being in Him and He in us—we may " work out our salvation ;" and yet not we ourselves, for it is He " that worketh in us both to will and to do." Phil. ii. 13.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT WE GAIN BY OUR LORD'S INCARNATION.

“THE Word was made flesh and dwelt among us ;” so we are told in Holy Scripture. The “WORD” is none other than our LORD JESUS CHRIST ; the taking flesh, here spoken of, is called the “INCARNATION.” If we would gain all the benefits that CHRIST in His Incarnation procured for us, we must be united to Him, and made one with Him ; we must not only get rid of the stain of our birth sin, which we inherit from the first Adam and bring into the world with us, but we must be able to order our lives and conversations according to the pattern which CHRIST has showed us in His life and conversation while on earth ; let us see how this may be done.

It is the groundwork of all true religion to “know ourselves.” As we come more and more to know our weakness, and sinfulness, we shall feel more and more the *need* of a SAVIOUR—one who has the power to remove from us all impediments to our spiritual progress—all “stumbling stones” in our road to Heaven.

You will agree with me that although

CHRIST the GOD-MAN has died for us, and has given "His life a ransom for (or instead of) many;" still we are not what we ought to be; sin abounds in the world, and is more common than holiness; people, for the most part, set but little store on the priceless blessing of salvation, just because they have such a poor idea of the treasure they have lost in original righteousness. They think little of being at variance with their Maker, because they have not felt the happiness of being *at one* with Him. They talk of having been "lost," and of being "saved," without at all understanding the deep awful sense of the words; people are accustomed to call themselves "sinners," but they don't consider what being "sinners" means, and from how much it shuts them out; they can't imagine the blessedness and happiness of God's Presence in Heaven; and, therefore, they do not estimate it as they should, or fear as they ought, to be excluded from that place of bliss.

It cannot indeed be expected that in this life we should ever *properly* know what the wretchedness of being separated from God is, or with what loathing God regards sin; but we may try and form some *idea* of it; for, unless we

know in some measure the misery of being *lost*, how shall we tell the happiness of being *saved*? It is only when we become aware of our sickness, that we begin to long for the aid of the physician. Who like the poor weary prisoner, who has long languished in captivity down in the deep dungeon, shut out from the light of day, can feel the delight of liberty and sunshine—the welcome sight of a deliverer come to bring him freedom? The tired traveller, who has wandered far away from the right road over the pathless moor, or through the wild and gloomy forest, best knows the value of a guide to lead him back into the highway, and bring him to a place of rest and shelter.

Yon poor shipwrecked sailor clinging to a plank amidst the fierce surf, and tremendous waves, expecting every moment to be his last; think you he will not hail the life-boat, which brings him deliverance and rescues him from the jaws of death?

Once let us realize the danger of eternal death, and we shall begin better to understand the value of eternal life, which CHRIST has bought for us at the price of His own Blood.

By Adam's fall we became at variance with our Maker, and but for CHRIST, Who offered

Himself for us, to set us "*at one*" with God, our portion must needs have been that fire of Hell "*prepared for the Devil and his angels*"—even the "*lake which burneth with fire and brimstone,*" which is so awfully described in Holy Scripture for our warning. CHRIST is equal with GOD, else He could not have done this for us. He is GOD Himself,—very GOD of very GOD—the second Person of the most Holy Trinity, of Which I will speak more particularly in the following Chapter.

This setting us "*at one*" with God is called the ATONEMENT—the word divided in syllables will show you the meaning of it—at-one-ment, setting mankind "*at one*" with GOD ALMIGHTY—remaking and renewing our fallen nature,—restoring it to its original righteousness,—giving back to it the image and likeness of GOD.

It has been said very forcibly, "through CHRIST our intercourse with GOD is renewed, and a door is opened which admits us to the ALMIGHTY." Now our LORD Himself says in the Gospel of S. John, x. 9, "I am the Door; by ME, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture."

We could not have done any of this for ourselves; we could not go up to Heaven, and get

back our lost righteousness ; we never could have reached it if CHRIST had not come down from Heaven, and *brought* it to us—ay bought it for us, at the cost of His own Life, and His most precious Blood ! He clothed Himself with our flesh in order that we might be clothed with His Righteousness. He left His FATHER's glory to become man, and took a human soul and body that we might be made partakers of His Divine Nature. He bore our punishment that we might be pardoned, and became as a servant and a slave, that we might be free.

In order that He might feel for us in *all* things, and that we might “ not have an High Priest which could not be touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” He “ bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows,” and was “ in all points tempted like as we are,” that so He might give us a perfect *sympathy*, and be like us in all things, sin only excepted. He *could* not sin, but He carried our sins and suffered for them. He could not sin, for His will was one with that of His Heavenly FATHER, and sin implies a will at variance with the Will of God ; but He *could* suffer ; and truly He spared not Himself, for in the words of the Prophet, “ He was wounded for *our* transgressions, He was bruised

for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes *we* are healed."

By His obedience He satisfied for our disobedience; by His steadfastness in temptation, for our weakness; by His resignation, for our impatience of control. In that most dreadful agony in Gethsemane, where "His sweat was as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground," what was His cry? "FATHER, not My will, but Thine be done!" Thus did He build up our poor human nature, and make it anew in His own likeness, even in the likeness of God. Thus did He sanctify all our human pains and infirmities by undergoing them Himself; and when at length hanging on the cross of shame, He cried "It is finished!" then was the ATONEMENT completed, and the wall of separation taken away which was between God and man. By that sacrifice of Himself did He obtain for us the means of uniting ourselves to God. Nor did He stop even here, for He conquered the last enemy of all—DEATH, by raising Himself from the grave, "and becoming the first fruits of them that slept." (1 Cor. xv. 20.) Oh, blessed thought! that even death should be full of

hope; for has not our dear LORD ascended up into Heaven, after triumphing over the grave, taking with Him that very human body which He had assumed for us? And is He not even now at the Right Hand of GOD, making intercession for us, and through His INCARNATION, bringing us into a nearer communion with GOD than ever Adam had before the Fall; pleading for us those five glorious Wounds which He received in His Passion (as His sufferings are called) and reconciling all unto GOD who are *united* to Himself? Henceforth, "O grave, where is thy victory—O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin," and *that* JESUS has taken away, nailing the writing of our condemnation to His Cross.

You see now why CHRIST is called the "SECOND MAN," for He regained what the first man lost; and thus it has come to pass that, "as by man came death—by Man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in CHRIST shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. xv.) He was the pattern Man—the first-fruits of mankind—the first-born of the *new* creation. Gaze we on CHRIST JESUS and we may see what a perfect man is—may form an idea of what we have lost by the

Fall, and what we may regain by the ATONEMENT. Nothing can so bring home to us the beauty of holiness and the hatefulness of sin,—the blessing of salvation and the misery of damnation—as the life and death of JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

Now the next point we have to consider is this—and it is a subject of very great importance to each one of us—How can I make the atonement of CHRIST my *own*? How can I obtain a *share* in the Incarnation of CHRIST, and in all the benefits attached to it? It is true that CHRIST died for the whole world. But it is equally true that we must belong to His peculiar people to share in the blessings and privileges which His death has procured for us. Of this we will speak further in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE NATURE OF GOD, AND OF HIS PRESENCE AND UNION WITH US IN HIS BODY —“THE CHURCH.”

WE speak of GOD, and of His having been “from everlasting, and world without end,”

(which means that He never had a beginning and will never have an end,) but for the most part we know little more about Him. "Behold, God is great and we know Him not, neither can the number of His years be searched out." (Job xxxvi. 26). "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." (Job xi. 7, 8, 9.)

Some Christian Truths are harder to understand than others; and yet all must equally be believed and taken on God's word. For, as I said before, God makes great account of Faith.

One of these truths is the "DOCTRINE of the HOLY TRINITY."

It is a MYSTERY—a thing beyond what our feeble mind can take in whilst we live in this world; but we are required to believe it, simply because God Almighty has said it.

You know there are many things in the natural world,—in God's works here on earth,—which pass our comprehension, and which cannot be explained. "Dost thou know when

God disposed them and caused the light of His cloud to shine? Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge?" (Job xxxvii. 15.)

Our own bodies for instance, how "fearfully and wonderfully" they are made! The changes of the seasons, how amazing they are! Gloomy winter, when everything seems to shrivel up and die; and spring, when all nature starts into life again;—night and day;—the mighty sea, which threatens to cover the whole face of the earth, and yet is restrained, we cannot say how, by the powerful Hand of God; Who saith to it, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." (Job xxxviii. 11). Then the grain of wheat which we sow in the ground and it seemeth to die, but we "sleep and rise night and day, and the seed springeth up we know not how," and gathers new life and becomes the ear of corn.

These are all wonderful things in themselves—these "marvellous works" of God—but they are "mysteries," one and all, and above our human understanding; we are forced to refer them to God as their Cause, and acknowledge His wisdom and power.

And so in spiritual things which are beyond our comprehension ; we should take reverently on trust what God tells us, and believe without seeking to know more than it has pleased Him to reveal. But I would urge one thing upon you very especially at this point, namely, that it behoves us to draw near with great awe and reverence to any of the great mysteries of our Faith, not lightly and carelessly, but with a humble, child-like spirit ; we must become as little children, simple and trustful as they, if we would have God teach us. God Almighty is not to be approached as if He were a man like ourselves. Remember what He said to Moses when He came near to him, “ put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”

Now let us consider what God tells us of Himself in the Bible. In S. John's Gospel, we are told, “ no man hath seen God at any time ; the only begotten SON,” our SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST, “ HE hath declared Him.” We know God sees everything and knows everything, and can read our thoughts ; for in the Proverbs of Solomon we read, chapter xv. 3, “ The eyes of the LORD are in every place beholding the evil and the good ;” and in 1 Chron. xxviii. 9,

it is said, "The LORD searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of our thoughts." We know God is glorious and terrible, for the Children of Israel were afraid when they beheld 'His Glory, and spoke of it as being "like a devouring Fire;" and Moses, the great servant of God, when he desired to see the Face of the ALMIGHTY, was told, "Thou canst *not* see My Face, for there shall no man see Me and live!" The Prophet Nahum speaks of God having "His way in the whirlwind and in the storm," and of the "clouds being as dust to His Feet."

The very Angels, we are told, veil their faces before Him, and yet, though He is Glorious, and Holy, and Mighty, He is "easy to be intreated," merciful and pitiful. Who could speak more loving, tender words than those recorded in 2 Corinthians, vi. 18, "I will be a FATHER to you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters;" and again, in the Psalms, "Like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the LORD merciful to them that fear Him." Moreover, we know that "God so *loved* the world," this world full of sinners, and with its first beauty marred, that *for it* He "gave His ONLY BEGOTTEN SON."

This, therefore, we know of the Great God—that He has always been, and will always be; that He is Almighty and yet very pitiful; that He knows all, sees all, and can do all things. Furthermore, we are told in the Bible, that there is only ONE GOD, but we are required to believe, that there are THREE PERSONS in that ONE GOD. This is the DOCTRINE of the HOLY TRINITY, to which I before alluded—the Three in One. The FATHER, Who is GOD; the SON, Who is GOD; and the HOLY GHOST, Who is GOD;—and yet not THREE GODS, but ONE GOD.

You will think, perhaps, that this is a “hard saying;” but you need not puzzle yourself about it—like a child, you must take it on your FATHER’S word. Have you ever noticed the shamrock or the clover, and seen how the three parts, so exactly alike, grow on one stalk, and form one leaf; this is a natural type or picture of the Holy Trinity; Three Persons, all equal, yet only one God.

It is GOD the FATHER, Who made us and all the world; created us out of nothing, in His Own Image and Likeness. He is the FIRST PERSON of the HOLY TRINITY.

It is GOD the SON, or the WORD, as He is sometimes called, Who redeemed us, bought

us back from Satan, at the price of His own Blood, and helped us to regain that "Image and Likeness" of God, in which we were first made, and which we lost through sin.

It is GOD the HOLY GHOST, Who, we are taught in our Catechism, sanctifies us, makes us holy and good, together with "all the elect people of GOD."

O GOD the FATHER, whose command
Form'd earth and Heaven, sea and land,
Thou mad'st us—guide us by Thy Hand.

O GOD the SON, for sinners slain,
To save us from Eternal pain,
Thou bought'st us—Thine we would remain.

O GOD the HOLY GHOST, by Thee
Our souls were once from sin set free,
Thine are we—Thine would ever be.

All power, and praise, and might to Thee,
The Three in One and One in Three,
The everlasting TRINITY. Amen.

GOD had from very early days always set apart to Himself some particular person or family to be His very own. He never "left Himself without witness." First, it was "righteous Abel," who served God, and was loved by Him. Then, whilst all the rest of the world perished in the Flood, it was Noah

and his family who were saved, because he was a good man, and did what the LORD commanded him to do; he built an ark after God's instructions, and was content to be saved in God's way; not insisting (as some people do now-a-days), on being saved only after his *own* way, and according to his *own* fancy.

Then came Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and their families; they are called the "Patriarchs," because they were the Heads or Fathers of the "chosen nation"—the "peculiar people," who were set apart to be the CHURCH of God in the Old Testament: of whom God said, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people." We call them the "Children of Israel," from the surname of "Israel," which was given to Jacob their father by God.

God loved Abraham the grandfather of Jacob so much, that he was called the "friend of God!" He promised to bless him and his children, and to be with them; and He gave them what was called the "Covenant of Circumcision," of which you may read in Genesis xvii. It was an ORDINANCE or thing ordered, by which they were taken into

Covenant with God, and united to "the people of the LORD;" so that even "strangers and foreigners," who did not originally belong to this peculiar family, might become one with it, and claim the promises of God.

God was with the Children of Israel in a very wonderful manner, and showed them many favours, though they were not always "found worthy." He gave them His Laws to keep, and His "ordinances to observe." He governed them, and guided them, and blest them for many years, and bore with them in spite of their many backslidings. He "trod down their enemies under His Feet," and rebuked them who would have done them harm; and, though He might seem for a time to abandon them, He never entirely forsook them, not even when they turned away from Him to "follow after idols"—"the work of their own hands—wood and stone."

Now these "Children of Israel," as they are called, of whom we read so much in the Book of Exodus, were the "Church in the Wilderness;" God "added" to it those whom He would save, and made them by anticipation,—that is beforehand,—sharers, (in some degree,) in the ATONEMENT of CHRIST. It was a type

or picture of the Christian Church, to which we, if we would be saved, must belong. It was not so good or so beautiful as the reality—pictures seldom are—but it was a shadow of that which should come afterwards, though far inferior.

You will find, as we go on, that this “Church in the Wilderness,” was a very true picture or type of the Christian Church. They had Priests as we have; for God set apart a particular family, whom He sanctified and authorized to “minister” to His people “in holy things.” The business of these Priests was to act as interpreters or explainers of His Law—to offer up sacrifices for the sins of the people, which were types or pictures of the great Sacrifice of CHRIST,—to conduct religious worship,—to make known His holy Will,—and the like.

GOD led His people through the sea, as upon dry ground, and fed them with manna in the wilderness—the bread of Heaven—and gave them water to drink out of the stony rock, and at length brought them to the “Promised Land”—“flowing with milk and honey.” All this He does still, for His own “peculiar people,” the Christian Church, the “elect;”

whom He has chosen out of the world, and far better things than these does He give, only after a spiritual and heavenly fashion. By degrees I hope—God helping me—to show you this more plainly and distinctly.

Now, during the long years which passed between the founding of the Jewish Church and the coming of CHRIST, men were yearning for a Deliverer—some one who could redress the miseries which afflicted every rank, and age, and country. They felt that things were all going wrong, were out of course, and they longed for one who could set all right.

The promised SAVIOUR, the “Desired of all nations,” was the Golden Vision of the Prophets—their writings are full of Him. They never seem to tire of describing Him, and picturing the joy and gladness which He would bring to all nations. We have holy Zechariah exclaiming, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, for behold thy King cometh unto thee!” as if the Prophet saw Him in the far distance approaching, and could not keep in his joy. Then again, he tells the people that “in those days,” (when CHRIST should come,) “a Fountain shall be opened . . . for sin and for uncleanness,” which means, in other words, that the

“Blood of **JESUS CHRIST** cleanseth from all sin.” But time would fail me to tell you all the burning words of the good men who waited and longed for the coming of **CHRIST**.

At length, “when the fulness of time was come,” **GOD** the **WORD**, the only **Begotten SON** of the **FATHER**, came down from Heaven, and was born of a **WOMAN**, the **Blessed Virgin MARY**, who has ever since been called the “**MOTHER** of **GOD**.” She is “blessed among women,” Holy Scripture tells us, because she was chosen to be the **Mother** of **JESUS CHRIST** the **SON** of **GOD**.

After the Fall it was foretold to Adam, that the “seed of the woman should bruise the Serpent’s head,” and so it came to pass. **CHRIST** became a little **CHILD** for love of us. He was “born of a woman.” He took our flesh, and humbled Himself, that we might be exalted. He stooped low, that He might raise us up high, and in so doing, He broke the power of that “old Serpent the Devil,” and overthrew his kingdom. He united our manhood to His Godhead, and became our “**EMMANUEL**,” which means, “**God with us**.”

The first announcement of the “**Good Ti-**

dings" from GOD to man was when the angel proclaimed to the Jewish Shepherds the joyful news, "Unto you is born this day a SAVIOUR, which is CHRIST the LORD." S. Luke ii. 11. And then the Church of the Old Testament gave place to the Christian Church, and the types and shadows and pictures were exchanged for the realities—the blessed realities which we enjoy in the advent, or coming of the SON of GOD. CHRIST JESUS founded that Holy Society which we call the CATHOLIC, or Universal CHURCH,—He is the Head of that CHURCH; He calls it in the Bible, His BODY; we, if we belong to it, are His members, and we receive our spiritual life and sustenance from Him. He has promised to be with His Church for ever and ever, until the end of the world. We are called Christians because we are members of CHRIST'S Body. The Christian Church is like the Jewish Church, in many respects, though far superior; it is composed of "all people and nations and languages," yet are they one in CHRIST JESUS, and united in Him. "It is built upon the foundation of the Apostles and the Prophets" we are told, and "JESUS CHRIST is the CHIEF CORNER STONE." Those who are not in the CHURCH cannot be said

to belong to "God's People;" they are "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel."

It is *only* in this Church of CHRIST on earth, and *only* by being united with this "people of the LORD," that we can find the means of union with GOD, and become sharers in the benefit of the ATONEMENT. We must become members of CHRIST before we can be partakers in the merits of the Great Sacrifice of the Cross. In His Church alone are we *sure* of His Presence and His Guidance; there only may we hope to "finish our course with joy," and come to His everlasting Rest.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE SIGNS BY WHICH WE MAY DISCERN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

GOD has treated the Christian Church as He did the Jewish Church, inasmuch, as He has committed to it "His laws to keep and His ordinances to observe." He has appointed a chosen Priesthood to minister to the faithful

in holy things, and give them “their meat,” or spiritual food, “in due season.” It is to them He has given the power of uniting His people, the “members” of His BODY the CHURCH, to their great HEAD CHRIST, by spiritual bands, which are called SACRAMENTS. I shall have much to say of these hereafter. I want now to mention some of the marks, which distinguish the true Church of God.

Let us first see how it is spoken of in the CREEDS; you will find them in the Book of Common Prayer. They contain the articles of our belief. There are three Creeds in the Prayer Book. One is the Apostles’ Creed, it has been handed down to us from the times of the Apostles; the other two are also very ancient. They are the expressions of the Church’s Faith—that “Catholic Faith,” which we are told, “except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.”

The Church is therein called ONE—HOLY—CATHOLIC and APOSTOLIC. This is the most ancient way of designating or pointing out the Church, and the expressions come down to us from the times of the Apostles themselves:—

1. We call the Church “one” because there

is none other, and because in it alone we are made one with CHRIST our SAVIOUR, and with one another in Him.

2. We call the Church "holy," because God's Presence is in it and sanctifies it, and because in it, He teaches and instructs us in holy things: all the members are not *necessarily* holy, but they have the means of becoming so if they will.

3. We call the Church "Catholic," because it is universal; extends throughout the world; teaches all people; maintains all truth; and contains all means of Grace.

4. We call the Christian Church "Apostolic," because it was founded by the Apostles at our LORD's command, after His Ascension or going up into heaven. They were the first Bishops, and they were appointed by CHRIST Himself.

Now to our SAVIOUR let us raise
The noblest hymn we may;
For with the voice of joy and praise,
GOD is gone up to-day.

CHRIST is gone up, yet ere He pass'd
From earth to heaven to reign,
He form'd one Holy Church to last
Till He should come again.

His twelve Apostles first He made
His ministers of Grace,
And they their hands on others laid,
To fill in turn their place.

So, age by age, and year by year,
His grace was handed on ;
And still the Holy Church is here,
Although her LORD is gone.

Whate'er we do, whate'er we say,
By it we must be led,
For though our LORD is far away,
His Church is in His stead.

Again, we are told in Holy Scripture, that it is the "pillar and ground of the Truth." For in the Church are preached those same "Good Tidings" which the Apostles declared—the true Gospel of JESUS CHRIST—the message of peace and reconciliation. The same order is observed as in their days, and the same doctrines taught which they have handed down to us in the Holy Scriptures. We have also our Priesthood as the first Christians had—ministers set apart for the service of God. It has come down to us in an unbroken succession, like the links of a chain, from the time of the Apostles themselves, and through the "laying on" of their hands. First, Bishops to govern and to make Priests ; then Priests and Deacons to

minister *under* them, in their order, and to impart to the people the sacred things of God.

Furthermore, in the Church the blessed Sacraments are administered; it is by them that men are united to CHRIST. They are the golden pipes through which the grace of God flows down to us from the Great Fountain-Head JESUS CHRIST, the Man-GOD, our most Blessed LORD and SAVIOUR. They are the cords by which we are drawn upwards to Him, and His love is let down upon us. They are the links of that golden Chain which binds us fast to CHRIST our King, and makes us partakers of His sinless Humanity.

Now there are various ways in which allusion is made to the Church in Holy Scripture, by the aid of figures and signs. In the fifteenth chapter of S. John, our Blessed LORD speaks of our union with Him, likening it to that of the branches with the Vine. He would signify by this the intimate union which we, as men, have with Him, the Man-GOD, through the Means which He has bequeathed to us in His Church, that therein we may become as intimately united to Him, and as closely knit together with Him as the branches are with

the tree—nourished, and strengthened by the sap which flows throughout and gives life to all. “Abide in Me,” says our LORD, “and I in you: as the branch cannot bear fruit of *itself*, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me; without Me ye can do *nothing*.”

You will sometimes too, find the Church spoken of under the figure of the “Heavenly Jerusalem”—that blessed city of which the Prophets delighted to speak—which is built of living stones, knit and joined together in CHRIST; rough, uncut stones will not fit into their places. All Christians are intended to find their places in these living walls. The Corner Stone is CHRIST; each stone must be cut and shaped so as to fit exactly into the place which God has designed for it.

I have told you already that the Church is CHRIST'S Body. He is the Head—we are the members; we on earth—He in heaven,—and yet always with us here by a very actual, most real Presence. You know that the members of *our* bodies cannot live without the head; and if a leg or arm be severed from the body, it dies and perishes altogether. So, in like manner, is it with our souls—separated from CHRIST our

Head—severed from His Body, the Church, they die, and perish everlastingly.

There is no assurance of salvation out of God's Holy Church, therefore it behoves those who have a regard for their souls, to continue "steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayer." We read in the Acts of the Holy Apostles, (as I have already reminded you,) that "GOD added to the CHURCH daily such as should be saved," and we know of no other salvation save that which is to be found by union with CHRIST our LORD. As we proceed to consider the special means by which CHRIST unites us to Himself, you will find that in His Church He still feeds us, as He did His people in the wilderness, not with manna, but with far more precious "Bread from Heaven," and gives us to drink out of the "Stony Rock;" for He is Himself the "Rock of Ages." And further, when fiery serpents attack us in the shape of violent temptations, it is He Who gives us strength to resist if we look up to Him for help; and if we be wounded in the conflict, it is He again who "binds up" our wounds, "pouring in oil and wine."

The visible Church on earth is only a part

of CHRIST'S body. It is called "militant," because it is still at warfare with our three great enemies, the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh. The other and by far the largest part is in Paradise, and is called "triumphant," because it consists of those souls, who, having "finished their course, and kept the faith," have "entered into the joy of their LORD."

They have "fought the good fight," and henceforth there remaineth to them only rest and peace, joy and gladness, and "sorrow and sadness have fled away."

GOD hath two families of love,
In earth below, and heaven above ;
One is in battle sharp and sore,
And one is happy evermore.

The Holy Church on earth must fight
Against the Devil and his might ;
The Church in heaven with war hath done,
And yet the two are only one.

For they who loved their SAVIOUR here,
And died in GOD'S true faith and fear,
Have joined the glorious Church on high,
And reign with it beyond the sky.

O teach us so to live, that we
May follow them, as they did Thee !

There will come a day when CHRIST will

gather all His faithful members "from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south," and "make them to sit down with Him in His kingdom;" and then His Church will be glorious indeed, "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing," for all that offendeth shall be cast out.

We who are of the Church on earth are yet united with those who have "gone before" and have entered into their rest. They pray for us, we may not doubt it, and we mingle our prayers and praises with theirs; and this is called the "COMMUNION of SAINTS." In it all holy souls, whether in the body or out of the body, are united in one common bond of love in CHRIST their LORD, and are brought very near to each other.

I have tried to show you that the "good tidings"—the Gospel message and the "Atonement"—would have been a dead letter to us as individuals, if there had been no *means* by which we could make them our very own. They would have been great blessings, but we should have had to gaze on them from a distance. I have also told you that the means by which we may lay hold on these treasures are to be found only in CHRIST'S Holy Catholic

Church. It remains for me to tell you more particularly *what* these means are, and *how* they are to be used. You know where to find them, but you must know also what they are, and how they are to be handled. They are so many blessed legacies which CHRIST JESUS left behind Him to comfort and strengthen and purify us, and be to us continual tokens of His love and favour.

In the other parts of this book we will consider these means of grace one by one very carefully, that so we may come to know more perfectly "what we must *do* to be saved."

We are children all of Adam,
 And in Adam's fall we fell ;
 Therefore sin and pain are with us,
 Therefore fear we death and hell.

JESUS came, the second Adam,
 To raise up our fallen race ;
 Son of Man, yet GOD Almighty,
 The Life Giver, full of grace ;
 Took our nature, that we sinners
 Might be born of heavenly birth ;
 Died that death might be "abolished,"
 Rose to raise our souls from earth ;
 And went back, when all was finished,
 To His FATHER's home above ;
 There to intercede for sinners,
 With a never failing love ;

Left a path that we might follow,
And prepares for us a place ;
And supplies, to help our journey,
Gifts of heavenly strength and grace.

And yet more. He still is with us,
Day by day, and hour by hour ;
In His Holy Church abiding,
With unseen but saving power.

Let us humbly bow our knees,
Praising JESUS CHRIST our LORD ;
With the FATHER and the SPIRIT,
Evermore to be ador'd.

A.



THE GREAT TRUTHS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

PART II.

“WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?”

CHAPTER I.

THE MEANS WHEREBY WE ARE UNITED TO CHRIST.

IN the Creed of S. Athanasius (which you will find in the Prayer Book) we are told, “it is necessary to everlasting salvation” that we “believe rightly the Incarnation of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.”

It is because so much depends on our having a right idea of the INCARNATION, that I entered so fully into the subject in Part I. of this book. I there endeavoured to show you that IT is the very key-note of our holy religion, without which it would lose all its harmony; and that the great Truth of “GOD in CHRIST reconciling the world unto Himself” is the foundation of

all Christian truths, for without It they would all fall to the ground. By It we learn the Love of God, and the hatefulness of sin ; for the INCARNATION is, if I may so call it, the *expression* of God Almighty's love for man, and His hatred of sin. "God so loved the world that He gave" for it "His only begotten SON ;" and GOD so hated sin that "He spared not His own SON" (when He had taken our sins upon Him), but "delivered Him up to death for us," because the "wages of sin is death."

Let us now consider the means whereby we can *ourselves* become sharers in the Incarnation, and be united with CHRIST's sinless humanity. We have seen that the place where these are to be found and applied to our souls, is the "Holy Catholic Church ;" the means themselves are the blessed Sacraments.

I have told you that the Church is CHRIST's Body. It is only by being joined to His Body, and becoming one of the members, that we can recover our noble birthright which Adam so recklessly cast away, and "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. iv. 24. This is called the "New Creation" and comes to us through the Second Adam, JESUS CHRIST. The

Sacraments are the golden bands by which we are bound to the sinless man—the God-Man, CHRIST JESUS our LORD. It is when united to Him, and *only* then, that God Almighty looks favourably upon us for His sake, and delights in us, as He did in the first man, before the fall. He beholds JESUS CHRIST in us and us in Him, and says, “This is My beloved SON, in Whom I am well pleased !”

Before we go any further, I will try and explain to you what a Sacrament is,—what the word means. The Catechism tells us that it is “an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.” In still plainer language, it has an *outside* part, which we can see with our bodily eyes—which is “visible ;” and an *inside* part, which we cannot see, because it is “spiritual,” and therefore invisible to the eyes of the body. This “inside” part can only be seen by faith—which is the eye of the soul ; but it is none the less real for all that. You know we cannot see the angels, because they are spirits ; and yet it is no less a fact that they are continually round about us, and we are very near the spiritual world, though we discern it not. Spiritual things cannot be seen with our bodily eyes.

Now these two parts of a Sacrament answer to the two natures of CHRIST. The *outward* part which we receive through *man*—which we can touch, and see, and feel—this should remind us of CHRIST's earthly nature. It is the means whereby we lay hold on Him. The *inward* part, which we can neither touch, nor see, nor always feel, corresponds to CHRIST's Divine nature. It is the means whereby He lays hold on us. As the FATHER is One with the SON, and the SON with the FATHER, even so we, by using these means of union with CHRIST JESUS, may become one with the Holy Trinity—God in us and we in God.

It was the especial prayer of our dear LORD in His Passion, that we might be one with GOD—reconciled to the FATHER by Him. This is why the Church sets such a high value on Sacraments and ordinances ; not for their *own* sake, (for regarded apart from CHRIST they would be nothing,) but because, *through them*, CHRIST deigns to visit us, and pour His grace upon us, and give us a part in Himself. They are the channels through which His love flows into our souls, and gives us new life and vigour. By them we touch CHRIST, and are healed of our spiritual diseases ; like the sick persons we read

of in the Gospel, who, approaching our LORD in faith, and touching the hem of His garment, were immediately cured of their bodily infirmities. S. Matt. xiv. 36 ; S. Mark vi. 56.

The blessed Sacraments are MYSTERIES, as I told you the Holy Trinity is ; we must take them on faith, and believe what we cannot understand.

Have you ever considered the meaning of two words which you will find constantly recurring in the Bible and Prayer Book, and always having reference to our LORD ?—ADVOCATE and MEDIATOR. You know what REDEEMER and SAVIOUR mean. The former is one who redeems or brings back ; the latter, one who saves or delivers. But “ Advocate ” and “ Mediator ” are not so easy to understand. In the 1st Epistle of S. John, ii. 4, it is written, “ we have an ADVOCATE with the FATHER, JESUS CHRIST the Righteous ; ” and in 1 Tim. ii. 5, “ There is one MEDIATOR between GOD and man—the Man CHRIST JESUS. ”

An “ ADVOCATE ” is one who says all that can be said in behalf of another, who pleads for him, who seeks to obtain for him grace and forgiveness. Our Blessed LORD is our “ Advocate ” with the FATHER, for He is continually pleading

His Cross and Passion for us, offering up His great Atonement, putting Himself, the Man-God, between God's justice and our sins, that for His sake we may be received again into favour.

A "Mediator" is something still more. The word medium, from which it is taken, means the channel by which anything passes from one person or place to another. To give you a very familiar example. Those wonderful telegraph messages of which you hear, and which are sent all over the world in such an amazing short space of time—how quickly they glide from one place to another—from one country to another! They fly like lightning—like the rays of the sun—like the wind hurrying by—like the arrow from the bow! No sooner are they written at one place than they are felt at the other; and of how much weal and woe are they not the bearers! Now we don't *see* these messages moving—they are invisible to our eyes—but we know that they *do* pass through the telegraph wires. The wire therefore is the "medium" by which news passes from one place to another.

So, when we call CHRIST "the MEDIATOR between GOD and men," we mean that He is

the Medium by which we hold intercourse with God, and God holds intercourse with us. He is the 'Middle party' through Whom God communicates with man, and man with His Maker. No sooner is any earnest prayer *uttered* on earth than it is *felt* in heaven: it passes through CHRIST. No matter what gift or grace comes to us from God, it comes through Him.

You may have read of Jacob's ladder, which is described in Genesis xxviii., he saw it in a dream: the foot of it was on earth, and the top of it was in heaven. The angels were continually passing up and down it, carrying messages, for they are God's messengers. What was it they were carrying? PRAYERS and GRACES. Prayers from men up to God; graces from God down to men.

Now that ladder was the type or picture of JESUS CHRIST the ONE MEDIATOR "between God and man." He is the heavenly Ladder by which we ascend up to God and God comes down to us. If God would speak to us He speaks through CHRIST; if we would speak to God CHRIST must speak for us. For CHRIST JESUS is "PERFECT GOD," yet at the same time He is "PERFECT MAN." As GOD, He is one with the FATHER; as man, He gives us the

power of becoming "sons of God," perfect men, even as "He is perfect."

It is a question of *vital* importance to know how we may be saved. That is, it is a question of life and death to each one of us. It is very true that JESUS CHRIST came into the world to save sinners; but you see we must ourselves lay hold upon Him, and make His promise of salvation sure.

Now "original sin" is the great obstacle to union with GOD. It is an evil which stands between us and GOD, and forms a wall of separation which must be broken down, if we would be one with Him. The question is, how are we to get rid of "original sin," which is born with us, and which we inherit from the first man? How are we to be born anew in CHRIST, and become the children of GOD? It is written, "Except a man be *born again*" (that is, born after a *new* and heavenly fashion), "he cannot see the kingdom of GOD." These are our LORD'S own words. We must have a *right* to be called Christians, and become members of CHRIST'S Body. We must be "children of GOD," if we would be "inheritors of the kingdom of heaven." But how are we "to pass from death unto life?" that is the question;

and we will consider the answer in the following chapter.

CHAPTER II.

THE REMEDY FOR ORIGINAL SIN.

ALL men are born into the world under a curse, and are the "children of wrath." How shall they become the "children of grace?" JESUS says He will heal us from the plague of our sins; and we may in spirit see Him beckoning to us from afar, and inviting us to come near to Him. But how may we make our way through the crowd, and come to His feet, and touch the hem of His garment, like the sick people in the Gospel we were speaking of a little while ago? We are told that the "Blood of JESUS CHRIST cleanseth from all sin," and that in Him is opened a "Fountain for sin and for uncleanness," in which we may "wash and be cleansed." But, as in the case of the sick man at the Pool of Bethesda, we need some one to put us into the pool at the right moment. S. John v.

We read of mothers bringing their little children to JESUS, that He might lay His

Hands upon them and bless them. Who will be our mother, and bring us to CHRIST ?

My dear friends, Christians have a mother too, blessed be GOD, a tender loving mother, who has brought them to CHRIST, and laid them in His Arms. It is the HOLY CHURCH. She brings us to our Heavenly FATHER, obtaining for us a new birth in "righteousness and true holiness;" and we being washed in pure water, according to CHRIST's command, and in the way He has ordained, are made clean, purified from our birth-stain, and restored to the image and likeness of GOD.

This heavenly washing and means of union with JESUS CHRIST is one of the two GREAT SACRAMENTS of the Church, and it is called HOLY BAPTISM. By it we recover what we had lost, and receive the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, FATHER. Rom. viii. 15.

How can we bless GOD enough for providing this glorious remedy for sin and death! and this most precious legacy JESUS purchased for us at the price of His own Blood. We may well value it highly, when we consider *what* it cost—what agony, what pain! The pangs of death to purchase life for mankind! Satan bids high for souls, and offers them the

“ pleasures of sin for a season ;” but who shall say that CHRIST does not bid higher still, Who gives His Life to obtain salvation for us ?

Now Holy Baptism is the Door by which we are admitted into God’s Presence. The CHURCH holds it open, and invites all men to enter in by “ a new and living way,” and have eternal life in JESUS CHRIST. It is what the prophet Ezekiel spoke of, as something that should come to pass in the “ latter days.” “ Then I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean ; a new heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you.” (Chap. xxxvi.)

By Baptism we are grafted into the heavenly vine, and become one of the branches. We are made members of that body, of which CHRIST is the Head. We are built into the walls of that Heavenly Jerusalem of which He is the chief corner-stone.

His Atonement becomes ours, and hereafter, if we continue in Him, we need fear neither death nor hell.

It has been beautifully said of the CHURCH, who is our MOTHER, and who brings us to JESUS, that we may be made “ children of GOD :”

Holy Church is CHRIST'S own body,
 She loves souls for whom He died ;
 All her labours are to bring us
 To our SAVIOUR crucified.

First in infancy she takes us,
 And applies the precious Blood ;
 Blotting out the sins of Adam,
 In the blest baptismal flood.

Then she leads us, as GOD'S children,
 Through this world of sin and pain ;
 Helping us in life's long battle,
 Till our SAVIOUR comes again.

There are two great "Sacraments of the Gospel;" one is HOLY BAPTISM, the other is HOLY COMMUNION, or the "Supper of the LORD." These two, the Catechism tells us, are "*generally* necessary to salvation," that is, necessary, where they can be had, for all who would be saved.

Besides these, there are other means of grace, which our LORD has provided for our spiritual needs in His Church. They are not "Sacraments" in the *same sense* as the two great ones, but they are of a Sacramental *nature*, inasmuch as they have an outward form and convey an inward grace. We may well call these "lesser Sacraments," or "Sacramental ordinances," and we will speak more of them

and of the Holy Communion in the proper place.

The word "BAPTISM" means washing. By our LORD'S command we bring our children to His Priests (His earthly representatives), and they wash them with water in the name of the HOLY TRINITY—FATHER, + SON, + and + HOLY GHOST. This is the outside or "visible" part of the Sacrament. By that *seemingly* small act, which would appear only to reach their *bodies*, GOD Almighty has ordained, in His wonderful power and mercy, that their souls should be washed from their birth-stain—their wills set free from bondage to Satan—the image and likeness of GOD restored to them—and the indwelling and guidance of the HOLY GHOST vouchsafed them. This is the inside, or "spiritual" part of the Sacrament.

GOD frequently makes use of the "weak things of this world to confound the things which are mighty." 1 Cor. i. 27. Thus He "sanctifies" common water to the "washing away of sin." Do you remember the story of Naaman the Syrian, who came to the Prophet Elisha to be cured of his leprosy, 2 Kings v. ? how disappointed he was when the Prophet sent out word to him to wash in

the river Jordan and be clean. Naaman went away quite angry : he thought it was such a small thing to do, that he despised it. But his servants were wiser than he, and they persuaded him and said, "If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash and be clean!" And Naaman did as he was desired, and his faith and obedience were rewarded, for he was healed of his plague.

HOLY BAPTISM is the New, or "Second Birth"—so called, because we receive it through the second Adam. By it we become "regenerate," being "born anew of water and of the **HOLY GHOST**," and are made fit to enter into the kingdom of God.

It is thus we are received into the ark of **CHRIST'S Church**; and if we only let the **HOLY SPIRIT** of God be our pilot, we shall be safely guided to that "haven where we would be"—that harbour of rest—the heavenly paradise of God.

The Prayer Book says "it is certain by God's word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved." This is why our Mother


the Church is so affectionately urgent, that we should use no delay in bringing our infants to the font. She is full of holy impatience to see them delivered from the bondage of Satan, and made partakers of the glorious liberty of the sons of God; and she trembles lest anything should happen to deprive them of this blessed and only means of regaining their heavenly birthright.

Oh, could our eyes be opened, but for one short instant, to look into the things of the unseen world! “the hidden things of God”—what wonders we should behold! Yon poor child’s soul, soiled and deformed with sin, and bound with Satan’s chains—under the curse of God’s justice—how shall such an one be delivered from eternal death and hell? Lo, our Mother the Church, full of compassion, knocks at the gate of God’s mercy, and brings that poor, helpless, miserable soul to JESUS. Does He reject it, because of its wretched condition? Oh no—He holds out His divine arms, and cries, “Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God!” See, He has taken it into His arms, and washed it white in His own Blood. Behold it now—how different! Can

it be the same soul we saw a moment ago, so unlovely to look upon? for now it is radiant with grace and beauty, and heavenly light—clad in a robe of dazzling whiteness, on which no stain is to be seen! And all around, the holy angels are rejoicing and singing alleluias, praising God for His mercy and goodness towards men.

My friends, this is no fiction—it is a blessed reality; it is occurring every day in CHRIST'S Church on earth, only our eyes are holden that we cannot see it. It is no mere picture of the imagination, but an actual, blessed truth!

I must not, however, let you fall into the error of supposing that baptized people must of *necessity* be saved, and are *certain* of going to heaven. That would be to mislead you, for it is not so. It may often have surprised you to see baptized Christians leading such ordinary—nay, sinful lives; and you doubtless wondered what could be the good of Baptism, if it did not keep men out of sin. The fact is this—baptized people *need* not be lost. God gives them in Baptism everything that is necessary to save them, if they follow it out and use their grace aright. But He does not prevent them from throwing away this baptismal gift if they will.



GOD makes salvation possible to us, but He does not make it a *necessity* in spite of ourselves. We must co-operate with Him. We have every day melancholy experience that people can waste or throw away their best gifts. There is such a thing, as what was intended for our spiritual wealth, being made, by our ill using of it, an occasion of falling.

It is an awful thought that our salvation is in a measure *in our own hands*. GOD will never be wanting on His part, *that* we may be quite sure of; but, on the other hand, we must not be wanting on *ours*.

Baptism is the remedy for "original sin," but it will not preserve us from temptation. In Baptism we are made like unto Adam before he sinned—nay, in some respects, superior, being united to CHRIST the GOD-man: but, like Adam, we have a free will, and may choose between good and evil, between obedience and disobedience: and, like him, alas! we *may* fall, and if we rise not up again, it may truly be said "the last state of that man is worse than the first." But we are not left alone in temptation. Greater is He that is for us than he that is against us. GOD the HOLY GHOST is always near us, ever ready to help us

when we call upon Him. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him," and the blessed angels have charge of those who have been signed in Baptism with the holy cross.

We were washed in holy water,
 We were set CHRIST'S Church within ;
 Gifted with His HOLY SPIRIT,
 And forgiven all our sin.

But though born again, and granted
 Grace to pray, and strength to fight ;
 Still remains our sinful nature,
 Weakened, not extinguished quite.

Still the wrong way will seem pleasant,
 Still the right way will seem hard ;
 All our life we shall be tempted,
 We must ever be on guard.

We are soldiers doing battle,
 Day by day, and hour by hour ;
 Each one with his own temptation,
 Striving in the Spirit's power.

Still that Spirit stronger groweth,
 In the hearts that hold it fast ;
 He will help us, teach us, crown us,
 More than conquerors at the last.¹

The more we consider the benefits of Baptism—all it gives us and all it saves us from—

¹ "Hymns for Little Children."

the more we ought to take heed lest we lose the precious gift, or quench one ray of God's grace.

Did you ever read that beautiful account (1 Cor. x. 6) of God's dealings with the Israelites? It was all a type or picture of what CHRIST would do for His Church in the latter days. GOD caused them to pass under the cloud of His Presence, and through the Red Sea, and they were all, as S. Paul tells us, "baptized to Moses in the cloud and in the sea."

Now it was on this wise. God's chosen people—the Church of the Old Testament—were pursued by the host of the Egyptians, and hemmed in on every side; there seemed no way of escape; when lo! the word of the LORD came to Moses, saying, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." Now this seemed like going to certain death, for the way led through the midst of the sea; but they trusted God, and cast in their lot with Moses, and followed him. The raging waves divided before them, and became a wall on either side, so that the Israelites passed through on dry ground; whilst their enemies who still pursued them, were swallowed up, and "sank like lead in the mighty waters."

Now, in like manner, CHRIST (of whom Moses was the type) calls us to pass with Him through the water—to be buried with Him, by Baptism, that so we may rise with Him, and reign with Him in glory. He opens to us a way of escape from our enemies, and after the “everlasting Benediction of this Heavenly washing,” Himself stands on the shore of the spiritual Red Sea, receives us into His arms, embraces us, and blesses us.

He too will be our guide through the wilderness of this world—as Moses led the children of Israel of old—He will make the “desert to blossom as a rose” for us; and if we cleave to Him, not only will He feed us here during the days of our pilgrimage, with heavenly Food, and give us to drink out of the stony rock; but He will bring us at length to the Promised Land—the Heavenly Canaan—“flowing with milk and honey.”

By His own Baptism in the River Jordan, our LORD has “sanctified water to the mystical washing away of sin.”

That same element of water, which was once employed as the terrible minister of God’s avenging justice on impenitent sinners—when the world was destroyed in the Flood—is now

changed into an instrument of His saving grace. The Ark, in which Noah and his family were saved, is a figure of the Church ; for the Ark was borne up by those very waters which were drowning the rest of mankind. In like manner, the Ark of GOD'S Church is borne up above "the waves of this troublesome world," riding securely, like a ship upon the sea. So that what in nature would have been a means of destruction, is made, by the Blessing of GOD, a means of salvation.

It is JESUS CHRIST Who hath changed the bitter waters of Marah, into the sweet waters of grace. Exod. xv. He has done it by the touch of the "Tree of scorn"—even the wood of His holy, life-giving Cross!

Having spoken at some length of the blessings of Holy Baptism, let us consider how they are used by the majority of Christians. Do men in general live as if they really believed themselves to be "children of God" and "members of CHRIST?"

Thanks be to Him, there are holy souls who have jealously guarded their baptismal purity, and have preserved their white robes unstained by wilful sin ; beginning, even in this world, to lead the heavenly life. But these are the few.

How is it with the many? How is it with ourselves? Remember, if we have wasted God's grace, it is our own fault, not His. It is no imperfection in His gifts, but our misuse of them.

CHAPTER III.

HAVE WE KEPT OUR BAPTISMAL GRACE?

It is indeed a very serious question to every Christian, and one he should not neglect to put to himself, Have I kept my baptismal grace?

At the Day of Judgment we shall have to give account of the talents committed to our care—how we have used them, and what we have made of them. Now God gave each one of us in Baptism a very precious gift. How have we kept it?

Let us consider the question together,—and remember, men may be careless as to the things of this world with impunity, but neglect of their spiritual affairs is, *death*.

How is it with you, my friends? you were once set "at one" with God Almighty, are you at one with Him now? Have you served Him faithfully and kept His commandments, as behoves good "soldiers and servants of JESUS

CHRIST?" Does God's Holy Spirit still dwell in your souls, or have you so grieved Him as to force Him to depart? Do you feel happy about your spiritual condition and prepared to meet God? Alas! I fear that to very many this must be a dark side of the picture, and one from which they would fain turn away. But let them beware how they do so. The only safe way in religious matters, as in all others, is to look the truth straight in the face, and not to shirk it; no matter how unpleasant, or alarming it may be.

You feel doubtless, as you "search out your spirit," that you are not as pure and sinless as you must have been when you were reconciled to God in Baptism. Nay, the more you look into yourselves, the more evil you see. How is this? How came you to be what you *are*, instead of what you *were*?

I will tell you how it was. You did not *use* the grace God gave you. He was not wanting on His part, but you were on your's. You fought against grace—when you were tempted you yielded—you "gave place to the Devil." At first may be there was a struggle, but by degrees it grew easier, and so sin grew into a habit, and you became blind to the conse-

quences. You forgot you had help at hand and that God would have given you strength to resist if you had prayed for it. You were deaf to the voice of conscience, that "still, small voice" of God, whispering down in the depths of your soul, and bidding you take heed to your ways. You wasted your gift and cast away your birthright. You had offered to you those very same means of grace by which others have become Saints, (who were, we are told, men of like passions with ourselves), but you used them not. You lacked goodwill to serve God—faith, obedience, love, endurance—and you might have had all for the asking.

Thus it came to pass that you quenched the Holy Spirit of God—and then what followed? perchance you grew reckless, and lived in open rebellion against your Maker; or may be you hid your sin and your shame from men; or again, you may have lived a life of careless indifference. Lukewarmness has ruined many a soul, if not as quickly, yet as surely, as great sins.

How must the angels grieve over the sad sight of man's ingratitude, and mourn to see that bright light quenched that should have "shone more and more unto the perfect day."

To have lost a precious treasure by accident

OR misfortune is bad enough, but be sure, the remorse of having lost heaven by one's own fault will be the great misery of hell! And now the question is, can what has been lost be regained? Is there a remedy for this sad state of things?

Blessed be GOD! there *is* a remedy. It is a painful one,—most remedies are. When we are seriously ill, the physician must strike home; there is no time for delay, the patient must bear with the nauseous medicine for the sake of the cure. God is always more ready to forgive than to condemn; His arms, like those of a loving tender father, are ever open to welcome the repentant sinner—none need despair.

It is true there are many promises in the Bible, which apply *only* to Baptism, and have reference alone to those graces and blessings which we receive therein. These seem tied to and bound up with that Sacrament, and when once lost can never be recovered. Again, if Satan have gained dominion over the soul you may be sure he will not easily let go his hold; you must expect therefore a painful struggle, and look forward to some hard up-hill work to win back salvation. But do not be disheartened, only be in earnest, and God will assuredly help.

you to regain some, if not all, of what you have lost.

It is always a weariness to retrace our steps. If we have strayed far away from God, it must needs take time and trouble to return. No miles seem so long and tedious to the footsore traveller, as those he must wearily go over to return to the high-road he has left. People do not become either very good or very bad all at once; the process is gradual: here a little and there a little. They contracted habits of sin by degrees, and they must form good habits in like manner, unlearning step by step those bad lessons they have acquired. "Habit is second nature;" and this saying applies alike to holiness and wickedness.

But what a blessing it is that God gives us a *chance* of being saved. Surely we shall not be deterred by difficulties, but rather be penetrated with the sense of God's goodness and love.

Conceive for a moment that chance offered to one of the lost souls in hell, would he think anything too hard to do, or to suffer, with such a hope as heaven in view?

If it were not for the exceeding "length, and breadth, and depth, and height," of God's mercy, our hearts might well sink within us

when we remember our manifold rebellions against Him, and the little store we set by the Death and Passion of His dear SON ; how amazing it is, that in spite of all this, GOD should not be wearied of us and give us up, but should still say, " Return, ye backsliding children, and I will receive you." Sin must be punished either in this world or the next ; how merciful of GOD to chastise us here, and spare us in Eternity !

Have you ever read any of those parables in the New Testament, which describe so touchingly the tender love of JESUS CHRIST for sinners ? Before I close this chapter I should like to call your attention to two of them ; we will take first the story of the Good Shepherd. S. Luke xv.

We here see our Blessed LORD in a picture, as a Shepherd seeking a poor wandering sheep, which had strayed far far away into the trackless wilderness and could not find its way home. How diligently He seeks it ! and at length He finds it, entangled amidst the briars and brambles, and sorely wounded with the sharp thorns. See how tenderly He disengages it and lifts it up on His shoulders, and carries it back to the fold, His own hands and feet torn with the

sharp stones and thorns of the desert ; and on His return He calls His friends and His neighbours together, and says to them, “ Rejoice with Me, for I have found My sheep which was lost.”

What shepherd so careful and tender as our Blessed LORD seeking after the sinner, who, like a poor lost sheep has wandered far away into the wilderness of this world ; leaving the fold of the Church into which he was admitted at his baptism, and where God fed him with His Sacraments, and gave him to drink of the water of His grace ? He has become entangled in the thorns and briars of sin, and cannot get free ; when lo ! our LORD hears his cry of distress, and comes to seek him ; He disentangles him from the brambles, and carries him back to the fold. When he is brought home, who are the friends and neighbours who are called together ? They are the saints and angels, who, we are told, rejoice over every sinner that repenteth, and share in all the joy of their LORD.

Again, in the same chapter, we have the parable of the “ Prodigal Son.” How he left his kind father’s house, and went into a far country, and there “wasted his substance in riotous living ;” until a great famine arose in the land and he began to be in want, and then

he was reduced to take service with a hard master, who "sent him into his fields to feed swine;" and being nearly starved, "he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him."

Here is another picture of the sinner. The Church is his home—it is our "FATHER'S house" on earth; but it does not satisfy him; its loving restraints and discipline are irksome to him, and he goes away, and plunges into the vicious pleasures of this world, wasting his baptismal grace in sinful living. But he finds Satan a hard master, for his wages are emptiness and death; his soul pines with hunger, and writhes under the gnawing pangs of remorse, and then he remembers the comforts and plenty of home—the sweetness of the "children's bread."

The Bible tells us how at length the prodigal "came to himself;" his eyes are opened to his folly, and he at once determines to return home, and cast himself upon his father's mercy. "I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son!'" He does not hesitate, &c

waste time in deliberation, but throws up his service without delay, and sets out resolutely on his journey back.

And how was he received? Not harshly, or coldly, as might have been expected, but the very reverse, for when he was "yet a great way off his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him." And, as the wanderer with shame and confusion makes his sad confession, the father at the very first word forgives and bids the servants clothe him afresh, and prepare a feast in his honour. He seems to forget his sins and his ingratitude in the joy of his return home.

GOD is the good FATHER. He will do yet more for us than this, if we forsake our sins and return to Him. Not only will He not upbraid us, but He will rejoice over us. "This my son *was* dead, and is alive again; *was* lost and is found!"

Now, in the next chapter, I will endeavour to show you the way back to your "FATHER'S house," and how you may be reconciled again to GOD, if you have had the misfortune to offend Him.

We were once baptiz'd with water
In the name of GOD above,

He Himself became our FATHER,
And looked down on us in love.

His Blest Spirit dwelt within us,
And by grace of our new birth,
We were heirs of heavenly treasures,
Far above the joys of earth.

In the Blood of CHRIST our SAVIOUR,
We were wash'd and purified,
Safe had been our souls and happy,
If as infants we had died.

But it was GOD's Will to keep us,
Still to serve Him here below ;
We were pledg'd to be His soldiers,
And to fight against the foe.

We were sheep, and CHRIST our Shepherd,
In His fold we had our home ;
He was there to guide and feed us,
And we needed not to roam.

But, alas ! our steps have wander'd
Far in other paths astray,
Through the bleak and thorny desert,
Where we scarce can find our way.

We have yielded in the battle,
And have serv'd our deadly foes,
Or have let them overtake us,
Whilst we slept in vile repose.

We have left our tender FATHER,
Spurn'd His gifts of greatest worth,
While we in our sinful folly,
Chose the passing things of earth.

For the Blood of CHRIST our SAVIOUR,
 All His pains and all His woe,
 What return of love and worship,
 Have our thankless hearts to show ?

Our dark souls no more are fitted,
 For the SPIRIT'S dwelling place ;
 Soil'd is our baptismal whiteness,
 Lost is our baptismal grace.

Can we bear GOD'S awful presence ?
 Can we meet His piercing eye ?
 Are we ready, should He call us
 Now, this day or hour to die ?

A.

CHAPTER IV.

THE REMEDY FOR SIN COMMITTED AFTER BAPTISM.

IF you study the Bible attentively, you will find that there is only one way of being restored to God's favour, if we have been so unfortunate as to forfeit it. This way is REPENTANCE. If we have lost our baptismal innocence this alone will set us "at one" again with our Heavenly FATHER. Let us see exactly what true Repentance is.

Repentance is sorrow for sin, followed by

amendment of life: deep, humble sorrow on the sinner's side for having offended God, and sovereign mercy and compassion on God's side, Who accepts this sorrow, and pardons the sinner for CHRIST's sake. It consists of three parts: CONTRITION, CONFESSION, and SATISFACTION. These three taken together make up that whole which is called "REPENTANCE."

1. CONTRITION means a hearty loving sorrow for our sins, not because of their consequences only, but because they have been the means of offending God, and separating us from Him. "A broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt Thou not despise." Ps. li. 17.

2. CONFESSION. It is not enough to be sorry for our sins, we must acknowledge them before God in deep self-abasement. "I said, I will confess my sins unto the LORD, and so Thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin." Ps. xxxii. 6.

3. SATISFACTION is amendment of life; a prayerful watchfulness over ourselves lest we offend again; reparation (as far as in us lies) of any wrong we have done our neighbour; and the thankful and patient endurance of whatsoever chastisement, God, in His mercy, may see

fit to lay upon us on account of past sin. "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" Lam. iii. 39.

In order to feel real sorrow for our sins, it is plain that we must know what they are; and this knowledge can only be acquired by self-examination; that is, by a diligent searching into our past lives. Perhaps you have never thought of doing such a thing as this, so I will try and put you in the way of it.

It has been recommended that we should make a review of our life from year to year, beginning as far back as we can remember. First, when we were little children; then when we went to school—into service, or business—and began to get our own livelihood, up to the present time—thinking how we have offended against each of God's Commandments, and tracing sins to their commencement—to their roots—before they grew into habits. Any great event in our lives, such as the loss of parents or friends—marriage, sickness, change of abode or the like, might serve to help our memory.

People often get into the way of thinking lightly of sin, because they view it in a *general*

way, and don't take their life to pieces, and consider the many sinful *acts* they have been guilty of in the course of it. They look rather to the faults of others than to their own. How often I have heard persons say "I am sure I've been no worse than my neighbours." They forget that we shall not be judged by our neighbours' faults, but by our own. Each one must answer for himself or herself in the Day of Judgment. "To his own master he standeth or falleth." "Judge therefore yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the LORD."

Others will tell you, "I've led a good sort of life—I've done nothing very bad—there are many sins I've never committed"—but what does the Bible say? If we keep the whole law of God, and yet offend in one point, we shall be counted guilty of all. In other words, *one* wilful sin separates the soul from God, as surely as *many*.

Of course the fewer steps we have gone along the road to Hell, the fewer we shall have to retrace when we turn back again, and the sooner, by God's help, we shall return into the way that leadeth to everlasting life; but we need penitence as much for one sin as for many.

One sin, we have seen, cost Adam and Eve Paradise.

The fact is, till people come to look into their past lives, they have no idea how many sins they have committed, or how bad their sins have been : they are often quite dismayed when they first discover what manner of men they are. For years, perhaps, they have been walking blindfold on the very edge of a deep and fearful precipice, and at any moment, had not God withheld them, they might have fallen headlong into what Scripture calls "the Pit of Destruction."

Again, there are those who take things easy, and are not inclined to be roused. If you speak to them of Repentance and sorrow for sin, they answer you, in an indifferent sort of way, "I know I am a sinner—all men are sinners"—and then they think the subject is at an end, as far as they are concerned ; but if ever they had looked into themselves, as I have suggested, and considered what they *might* have been and what they *are*, they would scarcely treat the matter so carelessly ; but would rather cry out in the bitterness of their heart, "Surely of all sinners I am the chief!"

We must measure our sins by the greatness

of Him against whom we have sinned. Think Who and What God is. How Pure ! how Holy ! Think how dreadful sin must be, since nothing can atone for it, or blot it out of God's remembrance, but the Sufferings and Death of His Only-Begotten SON ! nothing but the Sacrifice of the Cross could set sinners at one again with their Maker.

Think again, that every time you have sinned, you have wasted the Blood of that Blessed SAVIOUR and opened His Wounds afresh ! that by your own free will you have cast away that gift which He purchased for you at the price of so much Agony !

If people would only ponder gravely and earnestly over these things, and not drive away serious thoughts, as they are too apt to do, they would surely come to hate sin, and to mourn over their own backslidings.

Stand in spirit, O sinner, under the Cross on Calvary, whereon thy Blessed LORD hangs dying. Stand there with Mary, His own Blessed Mother, and S. John, the beloved Disciple, and S. Mary Magdalene, the woman who *had* been a sinner. Behold Him nailed to the "accursed tree;" on His head that crown of pointed thorns—the blood-drops standing

on His pale forehead, and trickling down from His pierced hands and feet. He is so exhausted by all the suffering He has gone through, that He can scarcely speak, yet He forgets not His love and mercy. Hear Him as He prays for His very murderers:—"FATHER, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Hear Him speaking to *thee* also, O careless sinner, and reproaching thee in loving terms for thine indifference. "Is it *nothing* to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow!" And remember it was *thy* sins—thine and mine—which nailed the LORD to that Cross of shame. It is "for us men and for our salvation," that those drops of blood stream from His open wounds. Canst thou say any longer that sin is light, or of small account? Wilt thou not rather smite upon thy breast, and say with the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner?"

Now I hope that after having reviewed *your* life, as it were, by the light of the Cross, and having seen how each sin you committed added to the bitter sufferings of your LORD, your heart may be melted, and you may be filled with that first part of repentance—which

is called **CONTRITION**, that is a “godly sorrow” for sin.

The second part of repentance is **CONFESSION**. We must confess our sins to **GOD** one by one; lay them at the foot of the **Cross**, and implore His compassionate mercy for **CHRIST’S** sake. We have **CHRIST’S** own promise, that if we come to Him, He will in no wise cast us out.

We must keep nothing back—excuse nothing in ourselves; and then, as we recall our sins to mind in the bitterness of our soul, and pour them out in penitential sorrow before **GOD**, we may humbly trust that He in His pity will remember them no more against us.

The depth of our wretchedness will cry unto the depth of His boundless mercy; and the fountain opened in **CHRIST** for sin and for uncleanness, will not be dried up for us by reason of our transgressions. “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” (Isaiah i. 18.)

But there may be some who cannot by this means quiet their own conscience, but require further comfort and counsel. As by the light of **GOD’S** grace they look into the dark corners of their souls, they are shocked at the loath-

someness of the sight; they begin to perceive what sinners they have been, and to realize the greatness of their iniquities—how, indeed, they are more in number than the hairs of their head. They are bowed down with remorse, too, as they reflect upon the *consequences* of their sins, both to themselves and to others; how irreparable they are! and the remembrance of God's justice well nigh blots out all hope of His mercy. Their cry is, with the Psalmist, "My sins have taken such hold upon me, that I cannot look up;" for it seems as if they shut out the light of God's countenance; and they are ready to exclaim in the words of the Prophet, "We have transgressed, and have rebelled; Thou hast not pardoned: Thou hast covered Thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through." (Lam. iii. 42, 44.)

It is then that the Day of Judgment rises before them in all its terrors—the fearful reckoning with God—with Satan, the great Accuser, standing at the sinner's right hand; all his dark deeds, and words—ay, and most secret thoughts, told out before men and angels, and he alone, and none to plead for him.

Well may they tremble, and long for some

ground of assurance that they are pardoned—some certain hope of acceptance and mercy in that dread Day.

We naturally desire, by some act of our own, to enter upon a new course of life, and that with the certainty that the past is forgiven. We would gladly take shame and pain to ourselves *now*, in order to avoid greater shame and pain hereafter. We long for something *definite*—something sacramental—a second Baptism (if it might be), to set us “at one” again with our Heavenly FATHER.

Now in one sense this is impossible; we cannot pass through the water of Baptism again and be cleansed. Nevertheless our Blessed LORD, Who always bears in mind our needs and necessities; and Who, in spite of our ingratitude and rebellions against Him, never hardens His heart against us, nor is wearied with us, has provided a remedy for this spiritual distress. He has left it, with other blessed legacies, in His Church’s keeping; to be used according to *our* needs and *her* discretion. Thanks be to Him, the poor sinner, who might else despair, may here find pardon and peace.

If you will turn to your Prayer Book, you will find, after the public Confession at Morning

and Evening Prayer, a form of **ABSOLUTION**, which is pronounced by the priest alone; in which we are told that "**CHRIST** hath given power and commandment to His ministers, to declare and pronounce to His people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins." **ABSOLUTION** means loosing, or setting free. **REMISSION** means pardon—forgiveness.

Now this "power" was given by our Blessed **LORD**, when on earth, to the Apostles; the Catholic Church inherits it from them. If you turn to the twentieth chapter of **S. JOHN**, you will see how it was first bestowed.

It was after our **LORD** had risen from the dead, and triumphed over death and hell; that He appeared to the Apostles assembled together, and showed them His wounded hands and feet. This was to prove that He was no false Christ, but the ever-living **SON** of **GOD**. And then, as the Bible goes on to tell us, "He breathed on them and said, Receive ye the **HOLY GHOST**: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

The Church of England, when she ordains priests, and sets them apart for the exercise of their holy office, gives them their commission

in precisely the same words, by the mouth of the bishop, who is CHRIST'S Representative upon earth. You will find this in the "Form of Ordering Priests" in the Prayer Book. This will show you that the power was not confined to the Apostles, but was transmitted by them to their successors the bishops and priests of the Catholic Church; who continue to exercise it up to the present time.

Now I think I hear some of you say, 'Surely none but Roman Catholics ever confess their sins to a priest.' But this is a mistake, as I will endeavour to prove to you, from the Prayer Book itself; which you know is the rule of the Church of England. Let us hear what is said about it there.

First, in the Communion Service, "when the minister giveth warning for the celebration of the Holy Communion;" you will see in the "Exhortation," as it is called, that we are recommended to "examine our lives and conversations by the rule of God's commandments;" and to "confess ourselves to Almighty God with full purpose of amendment of life." But if we "cannot by this means quiet our own conscience," we are directed to come to God's minister the priest, and open our grief;

that we may "receive the benefit of Absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice."

Again, in the office for the "Visitation of the Sick"—also in the Book of Common Prayer—the priest is directed to urge the sick person to "make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter." "After which confession, the priest shall absolve him" in these words: "Our LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners, who truly repent, and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences: and by His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST."

You need then feel no scruple about using this means of reconciliation with God, thinking it not to be a custom of the Church to which you belong. It is true, it has fallen into much disuse, as have many good and holy practices; but it is also true that this blessed Legacy of our LORD JESUS CHRIST still exists, for the consolation and strengthening of those, who are weary and heavy laden with the burden of their sins and spiritual infirmities, and cannot raise themselves up without help.

I should not be declaring to you the whole Gospel of CHRIST, if I were to keep back the knowledge of it from you. At the same time, remember, the Church of England does not *compel* her members to confess their sins to the priest ; she regards it rather as a privilege than a duty ; and leaves it open to each one to take upon himself the responsibility of doing it, or leaving it undone, according to his needs. If the *public* Absolutions of the Church will suffice him, let him rest content with them ; if not, and he cannot otherwise “quiet his conscience,” there is this alternative.

We were saying some time back, that there were those who longed by some *sacramental* act, to be assured of their reconciliation with God. Now this ordinance of Confession has in it the nature of a Sacrament, though it be not “necessary to salvation:” it was ordained by CHRIST Himself ; it has an outside part which we receive from man, and an inside part which we receive from CHRIST.

The priest of himself cannot forgive sins ; but he is the channel through which God’s pardon is conveyed to us. Just as when the Disciples of our LORD healed the sick, and cast out devils in His Name—the gift

is from God, though it comes to us through man.

Mighty is GOD's loving-kindness,
 Greater than our sins can be,
 Everlasting is His mercy,
 His forgiveness full and free.
 Still our FATHER's Heart is yearning,
 For the prodigal's returning.

Precious is the Blood of JESUS,
 Priceless and untold Its worth ;
 Full and perfect satisfaction,
 For the countless sins of earth.
 He for us is interceding,
 Evermore His Passion pleading.

Like the wind in force resistless,
 Is the Holy Spirit's might ;
 Quick'ning and converting sinners,
 Giving penitence and light.
 Still to gain our hearts He seeketh,
 E'en though grieved, yet in us speaketh.

In the Church are words of power,
 To unloose the sinner's chain ;
 To absolve the contrite spirit,
 Cleansing it from every stain ;
 Pardoning all who, sin deploring,
 Turn to God, His aid imploring.

In the Church, the keys so mighty
 Of the gates of Heaven are found,
 What she looses, that is loosed,
 What she binds, above is bound.

Peace with GOD through sins' remission,
Crowns all true and deep contrition.

Blessed and Divine compassion,
Rescuing the sin-defiled,
Bringing back the long lost wanderer,
Pardoning the erring child.
Holy SAVIOUR ! may we never
From Thy love and mercy sever !

A.

And now we come to the third part of repentance, which is SATISFACTION. Of course, the only *real* satisfaction for sin is the Blood of CHRIST ; and our works of repentance have no value unless united to the great sacrifice of the Cross. It is in JESUS CHRIST alone, that they are accepted and blest ; yet, “ when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.” Ezek. xviii. 27.

You see by this, that we are expected to *do* something for ourselves ; it is not enough to have confessed our sins, we must also make satisfaction by amendment of life. Having been delivered, by GOD'S mercy, from the burden of past sins ; our great desire ought to be to devote our whole future life to His service, and

“bring forth fruits meet for repentance:”
“submitting ourselves wholly to His holy will and pleasure, and studying to serve Him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life.”

We must too, as far as in us lies, endeavour to repair any injuries done by us to our neighbour; whether by bad example, or in other ways, and, like Zaccheus, if we have done wrong to any man, we should restore four-fold. Remembering also, to forgive those who have offended us, as we ourselves hope for CHRIST’S sake to be forgiven; and by acts of love and mercy, to show our gratitude to Him, Who has shown *such* love and mercy to us.

Again, if God see fit to send us pain or suffering, of mind, body, or estate; let us accept it thankfully, remembering that we have deserved far more; and that but for God’s goodness we might long ago have been in Hell. Satisfaction does not apply only to voluntary mortifications, such as we put upon ourselves; but to involuntary ones also which God puts upon us. The stripes inflicted by Him, and endured by us in patient love, will be so hallowed by union with CHRIST’S sufferings; that, under the shadow

of His great satisfaction, we may humbly trust they will be accepted by God's justice, in expiation of our sins.

I think this view of repentance, in its three parts, may be well illustrated by the case of King David, 2 Sam. xii. You will there see that David had sinned very grievously, both against God and against his neighbour; and God sent His servant, the Prophet Nathan, to him, to bring his sin to his remembrance. The Prophet did this, by means of a parable or story, in which he related to the king, how a rich man had oppressed and robbed a poor one, in a very cruel and heartless manner. David did not recognize himself under this picture, and gave indignant judgment against the offender: "The man that hath done this thing shall surely die!" And Nathan said to him, "Thou art the man." Convicted by his own conscience, and filled with remorse and contrition, the royal penitent cries out, in the bitterness of his soul, "I have sinned against the LORD!" This was his confession; and God in His mercy accepted it, and pronounced his pardon, by the mouth of His Prophet, "The LORD hath put away thy sin: thou shalt not die." But, although King David was for-

given, he was not exempted from the temporal punishment of his sin; for GOD sent him a heavy affliction, and chastisement in this world, which he bore with patient submission.

It was on this occasion, that he is supposed to have written the 51st Psalm; which has ever been in the mouth of all true penitents to the present time.

And now, I will close this subject with one word of affectionate warning to those, who "sometimes were afar off," but have been "made nigh by the Blood of CHRIST." "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."

As a tender nurse doth cherish
 Children trusted to her care;
 Lest her little ones should perish,
 For she knows how frail they are;

So the Church of CHRIST would find us
 Each in JESU'S arms a place;
 To His tender love would bind us
 Fast by sacramental grace.

"Bring the little children hither,
 Suffer them to come to Me;
 In the Kingdom of My FATHER,
 Many, many such there be."

Wash them in Baptismal water,
Sign them with the holy sign ;
In the words her LORD hath taught her
She conveys His grace divine.

Little snowdrops, may ye never
Forfeit your baptismal grace ;
So in Heaven your angels ever
Shall behold their FATHER'S Face.

Yet again her voice hath spoken,
Sharper than a two-edged sword ;
Hear the contrite spirit broken,
" I have sinn'd against the LORD."

Then by His divine commission
Who hath died our souls to win,
She pronounces the remission,
" He hath put away thy sin."

For the LORD to her hath given
Pardoning mercy to restore ;
" In His Name thou art forgiven,
Go in peace, and sin no more."

Oh, the depths of love unfailing !
Of unfathom'd tenderness !
Poor our words and unavailing
Such a meaning to express !

Listen to her voice of pleading,
" In the Name of JESUS come ;
Come, ye careless and unheeding,
Come, ye desolate and lone."

Saints who for the Faith contended,
In the same old paths have trod ;
When our warfare here is ended,
We shall share their rest with God.

T.

END OF PART II.

THE GREAT TRUTHS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

PART III.

“IT IS APPOINTED UNTO MEN ONCE TO DIE,
BUT AFTER THAT THE JUDGMENT.”

CHAPTER I.

THE ONE GREAT AFFAIR OF LIFE.

IN the two former parts of this book, I have spoken to you of some of those important truths “which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul’s health :” such as the Fall of Man — Original Sin — its remedy, Holy Baptism—and the necessity of Repentance for those who have fallen afterwards. You have seen how all spiritual benefits and means of union with God, flow forth from the Incarnation of our LORD JESUS CHRIST ; Which is the great main-spring (if I may so call it) of the Christian Religion.

It still remains for me to tell you of other ordinances and means of grace to be found in the Catholic Church; but before I enter upon these, I propose, in the present part, to say a few words of earnest entreaty and admonition to those baptized Christians, who are neglecting to make their "calling and election" sure.

Alas! how many there are, who, in spite of having been made members of CHRIST, and sharers in the privileges of His body—the Church—are yet hurrying on to eternity, with scarce a thought for their immortal souls. Far from being the greatest and most important affair of men's lives, salvation would seem to be the least, for it is the one most rarely and grudgingly attended to. It occupies the *last* place in their minds, rather than the *first*. They live as if this world were to last for ever, and there were no world to come after; and no account of their lives to be rendered at the Day of Judgment.

Now depend upon it, there is nothing on earth of such value as the soul. We "are careful and troubled about many things" in this world, but the one thing needful is to prepare for eternity. We have each of us a work to do: it is to complete in ourselves the

work which our Blessed LORD began for us in His Incarnation ; to reflect His image more and more in our souls, to become like Him in His sinless humanity, and to walk in the steps of His most holy life. None of us have too much time for this, we cannot afford to throw away an instant ; moments are precious, and there is the greatest risk in delay. A great saint was used to say, " God gives us to-day, but does not promise us to-morrow." We none of us know what a day may bring forth.

The care of the soul is of tremendous importance. It should be the one great business of our lives ; for it involves everlasting life or death—eternal weal or woe. Ere the breath hath left our body, our future portion will be decided. According as we have passed the time of our sojourning here, even so shall our judgment be. When once the sentence has gone forth, repentance will be too late. As the tree falleth, " even there shall it be." (Eccles. xi. 3.)

It makes one sad to see men so blind to their eternal interests, putting off repentance to the poor chance of a death bed. Suppose you stood on the bank of one of those swiftly-flowing American rivers ; and saw a boat drift-

ing down the stream, and knew that in a few short instants, it would be beyond control; drawn into the rapids, and dashed to pieces. How would you feel for the poor creatures within, if they were resting listlessly on their oars, idly playing with the waves, and watching the ripples as they glided by, unconscious of their peril? Would you not long to warn them of their danger? to cry to them from the shore, to stop ere it was too late, for they were rushing into the jaws of death?

Even so would we warn you, and entreat you to consider whither you are tending—to heaven or hell; imploring you to take heed in time before the stream become so strong that the frail bark of your soul can no longer stem the current. For if once you yield yourself to the tide of evil, it may carry you far beyond the point where you intended to stop. Return may be impossible, and then, O fearful thought! you may be hurried on by its resistless force, till you are swallowed up in the whirlpool of destruction.

There are few people so hardened as to venture to disbelieve the Bible, and yet, though it speaks of death and judgment, heaven and hell; the uncertainty of life, the value of eter-

nity, the importance of salvation, the necessity of repentance, and the extreme danger of neglecting to make our peace with God ; more than half the world treat these facts as if they were mere fables, which did not concern them in the least. If they lose a little money, or some good employment, or the like, they grieve and lament ; but when it is a question of losing Divine grace and God's favour, they are quite indifferent.

It would really seem as if men attended to everything in the world rather than to their souls ; and yet " what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul ?" If the soul be lost, *all* is lost. We have but one, we can never have another. God has entrusted it to our care, to " bring up" for Him, and He will one day require of us an account of our stewardship. The soul is immortal ; it can be lost, but it can never cease to exist ; and it is an awful thought that it must live *for ever* either in heaven or hell.

We have been " bought with a price"—the Blood of the SON of GOD. To save our souls, He came down from heaven, and sojourned amongst men ; clothed Himself with our flesh, and died upon the Cross. Shall we value

them less than He did? What dearer hope to those He came to save, than eternal life with Him in heaven?

He is gone "to prepare a place" for us. Are we fitting ourselves for it? We are placed in this world to learn our heavenly manners; by-and-by we shall have to practise them; how are we getting on? shall we be ready when He comes to fetch us? and fit to dwell with Him in His FATHER'S HOUSE?

We call the saints wise, because they were wholly taken up with one idea, how to please God, and save their own souls; why are we so foolish as not to walk in their steps?

Men are so busy, and occupied in this world, that they have no leisure to attend to their spiritual concerns; and so for the most part they wait till they come to die, and think to compress the work of a whole life-into a few days or hours. Would any sensible person, do you imagine, treat his worldly affairs after this fashion? would any one be likely to "get on in the world" (as it is called) who was so careless and showed such little diligence? and yet this is not our home—"we are strangers and pilgrims upon earth"—"we have here no continuing city—but we seek one to come." The

things of this world are transitory ; when we come to die and view them from our deathbed, we shall perceive that they were “all vanity and vexation of spirit.” “The world passeth away, and the lust thereof : but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” 1 S. John ii. 17.

It is sad to see people frittering away their time, and putting the thought of death and eternity out of their minds, because they say it makes them melancholy. They are determined to enjoy themselves whilst they can ; “let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die” —never mind what comes afterwards.

Could they do this if they *realized* that the “fashion of this world passeth away?” That however pleasant and prosperous this present life may be, it can at the longest last but a few years, and that the life to come shall have no end ?

How anxious people are to get on in this life : what pains they take for their worldly advancement—to push their children forward—to grow rich—or to be well spoken of:—even about their bodily health ; they spare no trouble to have their pains and infirmities lessened or cured. But directly it is a question

of their souls, all their interest is gone, and they subside into perfect indifference.

The careless and lukewarm, no less than the more gross and open offenders, are occupied in building up a great wall between their souls and God; and every wilful sin or thoughtless folly they commit is adding (as it were) another stone to it.

It is really not for want of knowing better, that men live as if there were no God; but they drive the thought of Him from their minds, so that at last they come to forget His existence; or at least to remember it very rarely. They know full well that they cannot sin with impunity, and that the "unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God;" but they are determined not to heed it.

All sinners do not openly defy God, and set Him at nought; there are those who are much alive to the advantage of leading what is called a "respectable life;" they hide their sins and deceive their neighbours; but they cannot deceive God, or escape reckoning with Him hereafter. People can't expect to live just as they please here, and do what they like—seldom to pray—never to think—and neither to love God, nor regard His will and commandments;

and then to enjoy the rest and the good things, which He has prepared for them that love and serve Him.

Time is going on—every day brings us nearer to Eternity—let us ask ourselves seriously, “Am I advancing, or am I going back in my Christian course?” It is a known fact that in religion we cannot stand still; we must be either advancing towards heaven, or going back towards hell. Like a man swimming against a strong stream; as long as he uses his limbs he gets on, but when once he ceases to do that, the current carries him back a distance, which it took him much time and exertion to accomplish.

There are so many who are trusting to the chances of a deathbed repentance, to set all right between them and God—taking their fill of this world and its pleasures, and waiting to be religious till they have done with it—offering the dregs of their life to God. What an indignity!

“Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.” Deut. xxxii. 29.

Days are coming, days are going,
Weeks and months are hast'ning on;

We, who on this earth are dwelling,
One and all shall soon be gone.
Soon our own familiar place,
Shall no more behold our face.

We must leave our friends and kindred,
We must leave our wealth and gain :
House and home, and hopes and pleasures,
Ev'ry earthly joy and pain.
When we hear Death's solemn call,
We must go, and leave them all.

We must go, but ne'er returning,
Shall our steps again be found ;
And our bodies cold, and lifeless,
Needs must slumber in the ground.
Yet though soul and body sever,
We shall live—and live for ever.

In that day of dreadful parting,
When the heart and flesh shall fail ;
In that day of fear and trembling,
What may profit or avail,
When the soul through paths untrod,
Must go forth to meet its GOD ?

Gold is nothing, rank is nothing,
Ev'ry joy of earth is fled ;
All the world, if he had gained it,
Would be nothing to the dead.
All alone each one must go
To eternal weal or woe.

All alone—then good or evil
Rises up our ev'ry deed ;

Words and thoughts rise up in judgment,
 And the sentence is decreed.
 For the righteous Judge and LORD
 Gives our works their due reward.

Humble prayers, and alms, and fasting,
 Deeds of mercy and of love,
 Done for CHRIST, though all unworthy,
 Find reward of bliss above.
 None is lost, however slight,
 He repays the widow's mite.

Those who worked for sin and Satan,
 Till they spent their mortal breath;
 They have wages, sure and certain,
 They have earn'd eternal death.
 As they sow'd so they shall reap—
 All too late the tears they weep.

Work we out our own salvation,
 With unceasing, trembling prayer—
 Seek we first GOD's heavenly kingdom,
 That alone is worth our care.
 Lose we all—may we but stand,
 In that day at GOD's Right Hand.

Blessed SAVIOUR ! grant us mercy,
 Now in this our day of grace ;
 Thou hast died for wretched sinners,
 Give us strength to run the race.
 Never let those souls be lost,
 Which so great a price have cost.

A.

CHAPTER II.

THE FOUR LAST THINGS.

THESE are DEATH, JUDGMENT, HEAVEN, and HELL.

Death is the punishment of sin ; had there been no sin there had been no death. It was sin that brought decay and corruption into the works of God. " God made not death : neither hath He pleasure in the destruction of the living." Wisd. i. 13. " By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men." Rom. v. 12.

Men naturally shrink from dying. Considered only with reference to the body, death is a fearful, loathsome thing ; with all its dismal accompaniments, so painful to flesh and blood. No wonder we recoil from it. But it is not the death of the body that need be feared—it is the death of the soul.

Think how it would have been if our Blessed LORD had not died for sinners. Death would then have been to us the gate of hell, the entrance to an eternity of torment, shut out

alike from hope and mercy. Our lives here below would have passed, either in hopeless misery, or reckless despair; there would have been nothing before us but a "certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation;" and we had all our lifetime, "through fear of death," "been subject to bondage."

But, blessed be God, "CHRIST hath overcome death," and robbed it of its terrors. By Himself passing through the "grave and gate of death," He hath "opened to us the gate of everlasting life." "He hath *abolished* death" (that is, the eternal death of the soul); and "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."

But *for whom* hath JESUS CHRIST "abolished" death? For those only who have made their peace with God, and shall be found in Him at His appearing. We must die to sin here, if we would rise to glory hereafter.

Remember that *as* Death finds us, so shall our eternity be. Death shuts the door. No more opportunities after that. No more time for repentance. "Then shall it be too late to knock when the door shall be shut; and too late to cry for mercy, when it is the time for justice." Why do you delay, and think to

compress the work of a lifetime into a few short hours, or even minutes, which *may* never be granted you? Oh, the despair and anguish of that word, "too late!"

We read of a great queen, who, on her death-bed, was heard to cry, "All my kingdom for one hour of time." But "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them," could not buy one moment.

Believe me, your last hour is no time to make your peace with God; a "death-bed repentance" (as it is called) is but a broken reed to lean upon.

How continually we hear of sudden death. Some one we know, perhaps, called away at a minute's warning to his last account. Some unlooked-for accident—some deadly stroke. One week he was well, and little dreamt of this summons; and the next he is dead and buried! What time had he to get ready? what time to repent and amend his life? How will he appear all unprepared before the awful Presence of God? Was he not duly warned? Who shall lay it to God's charge? Is it not written, "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh?" (S. Matt. xxiv. 44.) Therefore "defer not till death to

be justified," for "truly it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!"

And now, let us suppose the case of one who is not called away from this world so hurriedly. Will it be so much better with him, if he have been equally improvident?

He is smitten with a mortal disease; at the outset probably neither he nor his friends know that his sickness is unto death; and so long as there is hope of recovery, every pains is taken to keep him quiet and undisturbed; and to avoid all subjects of anxiety or excitement. But at length, every remedy having been tried and failed, it becomes only too evident that he will never recover, and is drawing nigh unto death. His friends perhaps dare not tell him that there is no hope, (and what false kindness is this), but their tears and the physician's grave looks, tell their own tale; and he reads too plainly in their faces, that his days are numbered.

And then, what must his feelings be as he finds he is about to die and meet God? At first maybe he is stunned, and can scarcely take it in; but as he comes to realize it, how must the thought fill him with terror and dismay! He has never begun the work of repentance,

or given any care to his spiritual affairs ; and now, as he tosses about on his sick bed, restless and uneasy, weak in body and mind, he is at a loss how, or where to begin.

Every exertion is painful to him—his head perhaps wanders—anyways he is so feeble, or in so much pain, that he cannot fix his thoughts on any one thing for long together. His sins rise up in judgment before him, and scare him ; he dare not look them in the face. Acts of sin, or evil words and thoughts, which he had forgotten, come back to his mind at this time, and are a burthen to him.

Instead of religion being a comfort then, when he most needs comfort ; his past neglect of his soul, and forgetfulness of God, only fill him with fear. When he would fain be resting upon JESUS—and at peace—he finds he has got yet to know JESUS, and to learn how to love Him: He sees nothing but unrepented, and therefore unforgiven sins crowding about him on every side ; he may well tremble, as he contemplates the long tedious work before him, which he is so unfit to undertake ; and be ready to despair !

And then, God's warnings and threats in the Bible, rise up before his memory, and appal him ;

for his whole past life, as he looks back upon it, appears like a confused tangled web of sins and evil habits, which he cannot unravel. He would like to bring them forth one by one to the light, and sorrow for them, and confess them before God—but he gets bewildered—he tries to examine himself, and gives it up in despair. He endeavours to pray; but it is such a new thing to him, that he does not know how to set about it. Besides he is so weak and ill.

They send for the clergyman — when he comes *his* heart sinks within him also—for he sees a great work to be done, which requires both time and health to do properly; and here is neither time, nor health, nor power of body, nor energy of mind to carry it out.

The clergyman does what he can; but repentance is a thing which no man can do for us—we must do it for ourselves. Others may help us, and teach us how to set about it, but they cannot do it for us. It is a weary, toilsome business when a man is well, and has his mind clear—but how much worse, when he is exhausted by sickness, and his memory clouded by the approach of death.

What would such an one not give for a few

days of his former health and vigour? How bitterly will he regret that miserable blindness and improvidence, which led him to put off to such a time as this, a matter of such grave importance!

Satan too is always busy about a death-bed, suggesting dark thoughts even to the faithful; for at that hour he has "great wrath, knowing that his time is short." He cannot bear to lose a soul, and longs to lure it to its destruction.

We may not set bounds to God's mercy—God forbid that we should do so! Blessed be His Name, there are cases recorded of souls which have been saved, even at the eleventh hour; but their number would seem to be few. The risk is great: let no man run it so close, when his salvation is at stake.

Before we close the subject of death, let us give a few moments' consideration to the case of him, whose whole life has been a preparation for his latter end.

Never perhaps does the contrast between the real, and nominal Christian appear so striking, as when he is brought face to face with Death; at whose approach, all earthly things crumble and fade away. "What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained,

when **God** taketh away his soul?" Job xxii. 8; "but the righteous hath hope in his death." Prov. xiv. 32. Let us see on what foundation that hope is built, that hath power to smooth the bed of sickness, and lighten the dark passage through the valley of the shadow of death.

Hear the dying saint speak for himself: "I know Whom I have believed; and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." 2 Tim. i. 12. *What* has he "committed" unto the **LORD**? his heart and its best affections—his life and his soul. And now he is going to **JESUS**, to be with Him for ever. His weary struggle with sin and temptation will soon be over, and he will be like his **LORD**, for he "shall see Him as He is." "When I awake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it."

No more pain and sorrow—no more partings and tears—above all no more sin or death. Even his worldly possessions will not be lost to him, for he has lent them to the **LORD** in His Church, and in His poor; and will find them again, "where neither rust nor moth doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

In this life perhaps, he has been tried with affliction, but it has drawn him nearer to **JESUS**—he has lost friends; but death will give them back to him, never more to part.

Even the act of dying, from which the flesh *must* shrink, is soothed by the sweet promises of **GOD**—“Fear not, for I have redeemed thee—I have called thee by thy name—thou art Mine. When thou passest through the water, I will be with thee: through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee: For I am the **LORD** thy **GOD**—the Holy One of Israel, thy **SAVIOUR**.” Isa. xliii. 1, 2, 3. And the response of faith is, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see **GOD**.” Job xix. 25.

This is the secret of all the Christian’s joy—“I shall see **GOD**.”—“Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off.” Isa. xxxiii. 17.

And now, which of these two death-beds would you wish to be yours? That of the sinner, or of the saint? If you would die the

death of a saint, you must live the life of a saint. The work is long and the time is short. What you will wish you had done when you come to die, that do now. "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

When death is drawing near,
 And our hearts shrink in fear,
 And our limbs fail ;
 Raise we our hands and pray
 To Him, who smooths the way
 Through the dark vale.

Where glows the eastern dawn,
 Echoes in the red morn
 The angel's song—
 Lift we our weary eyes,
 Which from the glorious skies
 Have turn'd too long.

Death comes to set us free,
 Meet we him cheerily
 As our true friend.
 And all our fears shall cease,
 And in eternal peace
 Our penance end!¹

What comes *after* Death ?
 I have heard it related of a holy man, that
 he was travelling once with a gay and thought-

¹ Fouqué's *Sintram*.

less party of young men, who were jesting on sacred subjects in a very profane and irreverent manner; at length they met a funeral, and one of them exclaimed, "There goes the last affair of all!" "Not so, my friend," said the good man gently—"after death is the judgment." The heedless ones were silenced at these words, and to one at least of them, this warning was the turning point of life.

The JUDGMENT—Holy Scripture says "we must all appear before the judgment seat of CHRIST." For what must we appear? "That every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done—whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. v. 10. And "they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; but they that have done evil into everlasting fire."

No sooner shall the breath have left the body, than the soul will wake up to the consciousness of its eternal destiny; for death will determine *where* it shall await its final sentence. And what an awakening that will be! How we shall marvel to find we have all our life long been so close to the world of spirits, and knew it not!

The soul that has departed this life in peace.

with God, need not dread that awakening; we may picture to ourselves the angels meeting it and conducting it to Paradise, there, with the blessed saints, to abide the final judgment, in the "sure and steadfast hope" of everlasting union with its LORD. Can you not imagine how its guardian angel will rejoice over its felicity, and unite with it in thanksgivings and songs of praise?

But the impenitent sinner's soul—who may tell its fate? Not angels but devils will hurry it to the shades of darkness, where it will in terror expect the sentence, which shall consign it to eternal death in Hell.

Holy Scripture has revealed to us some very awful particulars of what shall occur in that great Day of final retribution. It tells us that "the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from Heaven, and the powers of Heaven shall be shaken." And upon earth there "shall be distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven (the Holy Cross which men de-

spised): and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds"—“from the uttermost part of the earth, to the uttermost part of Heaven.” S. Matt. xxiv. ; S. Mark xiii. ; S. Luke xxi.

“And every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him.” These shall say “to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the Face of Him, that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand!” Rev. vi. 16, 17. But to the righteous, it is said: “when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” S. Luke xxi.

The great S. Chrysostom says, “in that day the very wounds of CHRIST shall plead against the impenitent sinner—the nails shall complain of him,—and the Cross shall accuse him.” It will not be *then*, as *now*, when JESUS is “easy to be entreated,” or as when He came to “visit the earth in great humility;” for the “wrath of

the Lamb" upon reprobate sinners, is spoken of as something too terrible to describe.

S. Paul tells us (Acts xvii. 31) that God "hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man Whom He hath ordained :"—For "He hath committed all judgment unto the Son."

S. John the Divine saw in a vision, "a great white throne, and Him that sat upon it, from whose Face the earth and the heaven fled away ; and there was found no place for them." And he saw "the dead small and great stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things, which were written in the books, according to their works."

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell (or the "grave," see marginal note) delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged, every man according to their works." Rev. xx. 11, 12, 13.

The books out of which we shall be judged (it has been said) are, the book of the Gospels, and that of our own lives. In the Gospel will be found what we *ought* to have done—in our lives what we *have* done.

That day of wrath, that dreadful day,
 When heaven and earth shall pass away,
 What power shall be the sinner's stay ?
 How shall he meet that dreadful day ?

When shrivelling like a parched scroll,
 The flaming heavens together roll ;
 When louder yet, and yet more dread,
 Swells the high trump that wakes the dead :

Oh, on that day, that wrathful day,
 When man to judgment wakes from clay ;
 Be Thou, O CHRIST, the sinner's stay,
 Though heaven and earth shall pass away.¹

“ All men shall rise again with their bodies,” saith the Creed ; but “ flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” “ Behold, I show you a mystery ; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” 1 Cor. xv. 50, 51, 52. “ The dead in CHRIST shall rise first :” they “ which sleep in JESUS, will God bring with Him.”

Does the mother lay down her child to sleep at night and forget in the morning where she

¹ Hymns, Novello's Edition, No. 38.

has laid him? Far less does our Blessed LORD forget the place where any child of His lies sleeping. It will be His Voice that will awake him on the great morning of the Resurrection "It is I, be not afraid."

Those that are alive at CHRIST's coming, (in the Creed called "the quick,") "shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the LORD in the air: and so shall we ever be with the LORD." He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious Body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."

Who shall belong to CHRIST in that day? None but those who have "His FATHER's Name written in their foreheads." Rev. xiv. It was stamped there when we were baptized, like the head of the Sovereign on the coin of the land, and nothing but final impenitence can totally efface It.

Since the time that first we came,
 To receive the SAVIOUR's Name,
 We, His sons and servants now,
 Have the Cross upon our brow.

Never let the mark grow dim:
 By it we are signed for Him:

Should it ever fade away,
Who can face the Judgment Day?¹

The wicked too, "shall rise again with their bodies;" but another mark—the mark of Satan—is upon them, and to Satan will they belong, body and soul, to all eternity. For "the LORD JESUS shall be revealed from heaven, with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the Presence of the LORD and from the Glory of His Power."

Our LORD Himself, under various figures, describes His coming to judgment. He tells us of the Master travelling into a far country, giving his servants his goods wherewith to trade, and of their Lord's return, and reckoning with them; of the Bridegroom coming to the marriage, and the virgins awaiting his summons with their lamps. All those who were found faithful, entered into the joy of their Lord, but the slothful and unprepared were shut out from his presence for ever.

"When the Son of Man shall come in His •

¹ Neale.

glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left." Then shall He "say to them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My FATHER, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." But to those on His left hand He shall say, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their FATHER." "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Great GOD, what do I see and hear ?

The end of things created :

The Judge of all men doth appear,

On clouds of glory seated :

The trumpet sounds, the graves restore

The dead which they contained before :

Prepare, my soul, to meet Him.

The dead in CHRIST are first to rise,

At that last trumpet's sounding ;

Caught up to meet Him in the skies,

With joy their LORD surrounding :

No gloomy fears their souls dismay :
His Presence sheds eternal day,
On those prepared to meet Him.

The ungodly, filled with guilty fears,
Behold His wrath prevailing ;
In woe they rise, but all their tears
And sighs are unavailing :
The day of grace is past and gone ;
Trembling they stand before His throne,
All unprepared to meet Him.

Great Judge, to Thee our prayers we pour,
In deep abasement bending ;
O shield us through that last dread hour,
Thy wondrous love extending ;
May we, in this, our trial day,
With faithful hearts Thy word obey,
And thus prepare to meet Thee.¹

“ We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge.

“ We therefore pray Thee, help Thy servants, whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy most precious Blood.”

What is HEAVEN ? It is the unclouded Presence of Almighty God. “ In Thy presence is the fulness of joy : and at Thy right hand there is pleasure for evermore.”

¹ Hymns, Novello's Edition, No. 37.

Our Blessed LORD, before He left the earth, comforted His loved ones with this assurance, "In My FATHER's house are many mansions:" "I go to prepare a place for you. I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

His prayer to His FATHER on the eve of His passion was: "FATHER, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." S. John xiv. and xvii.

Then only, when He is surrounded with His redeemed, the fruit of the sacrifice of the Cross, will our beloved SAVIOUR "see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied." For "the redeemed of the LORD shall return and come with singing unto Zion; everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." Isaiah li. 11. "Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which *are written in heaven*; and to God, the Judge

of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to JESUS, the Mediator of the New Covenant." Heb. xii.

Then at length the Church (CHRIST'S Body) will be "complete in Him, Which is the Head." Types and shadows will have passed away, and the glorious reality be there.

But who may describe life everlasting? who may picture eternal joy? "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Cor. ii. 9. How then can words of ours pourtray them?

The beloved Apostle saw in a vision, Heaven, as the "holy city," the "new Jerusalem," "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband;" "having the glory of God: and her light like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." He tells us of the walls of precious stones, the gates of pearls, and the streets of gold; and of the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God." That blissful city, he says, will have "no need of the sun, *neither* of the moon to shine in it; for the *glory* of God will lighten it, and the Lamb is

the light thereof." "The gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there." Rev. xxi.

And who shall be the inhabitants? "The nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it, and they that are written in the Lamb's Book of Life." There shall be found the beautiful assemblage of the Saints—the glorious company of the Apostles—the goodly fellowship of the Prophets—the noble army of Martyrs—"a great multitude which no man can number of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands." "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

The blessed ones shall all be arrayed in this manner, in garments of dazzling whiteness, and God shall set a crown of pure gold on their heads. "They shall hunger no more, neither shall they thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." "There shall be

no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

The devil can no more come near to hurt them, they have done with sin, and can never again be soiled therewith. From this time forth all is rest, and joy, and peace, and thanksgiving. "There the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest. The prisoners rest together. They hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there, and the slave is free from his master. Light is given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul." For now are they "numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints."

What happy meetings then with those we have loved on earth! what joyful recognitions! No more partings—no more change—who shall in that day regret the sorrows and trials of his former life, as he looks back on them from the place of his everlasting rest? And what if he have been allowed, of God's mercy, to win one single soul to JESUS, and bring it to His feet!

Oh, those joys of heaven! where every wish will be satisfied, and every desire fulfilled—

where rebellion against the will of God will be unknown. There will be found the perfection of beauty—the fulness of knowledge—the consummation of love and bliss! There will be the society of the blessed saints and angels—the sweet music of endless alleluias—the sight of faces radiant with joy—the fragrance of delicious odours, and, above all, an eternity of rest and praise.

“Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”

O one, O only mansion!

O paradise of joy!

Where tears are ever banished,

And smiles have no alloy.

With jasper glow thy bulwarks,

Thy streets with emeralds blaze;

The sardius and the topaz

Unite in thee their rays.

Thy ageless walls are bonded

With amethyst unpriced;

The saints build up its fabric,

And the corner-stone is CHRIST.

Thou hast no shore, fair ocean!

Thou hast no time, bright day!

Dear fountain of refreshment

To pilgrims far away!

I know not, oh, I know not
 What joys await us there ;
 What radiancy of glory,
 What bliss beyond compare.

They stand those halls of Sion
 All jubilant with song,
 And bright with many an angel,
 And all the martyr throng.

And they who with their Leader
 Have conquered in the fight,
 For ever and for ever
 Are clad in robes of white !¹

What is HELL? Eternal banishment from the Presence of God Almighty. "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels."

This is the awful sentence which our Lord will pronounce upon those on His Left Hand in the Day of Judgment. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God."—"Tophet is ordained of old, yea for the King it is prepared ; He hath made it deep and large ; the pile thereof is fire and

¹ Neale's Rhythm of S. Bernard. Hymns and Introits, 176. Novello, 142.

much wood—the Breath of the LORD like a stream of brimstone doth kindle it.” Isa. xxx. 33.

Holy Scripture reveals but little of this place of torment : As the joys of Heaven are beyond conception, so would words fail to describe the everlasting terrors of Hell—that bottomless pit, into which the condemned will be cast, to dwell with evil spirits—in “outer darkness”—the “blackness of darkness” for ever. “*There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth,*” where “*their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*” For “*who can dwell with everlasting burnings?*”

“Depart from Me”—Oh, the anguish of those words ! All lost—too late to repent, or to hope for mercy. Hope that buoys us up under so many troubles and trials of this life, will then be at an end. As Satan and his evil angels drive them forth from the presence of God, what will be their remorse and despair, when they reflect that their punishment is eternal, and that they brought it upon themselves ? Methinks of all their torments this will be the worst, to feel they are lost by their own fault ; to think what they *might* have been and what they *are*—*where* they might

have been and *where* they are! and to be forced even in their sore anguish to acknowledge the justice of God.

Consider for a moment what Hell is. To be in the power of Satan—in the company of devils; to hear nothing but fearful sounds, cursings and blasphemies—to see nothing but dreadful sights—to feel nothing but agonizing pain; and that without the most distant prospect of its ever being lessened. Not a drop of water even to cool their tongue! And this not for a hundred, or a thousand years, *that* might be borne, but for *ever* and *ever*! What would not lost souls give to live their lives on earth over again, and to have once more a chance of salvation?

But who are they who shall be cast into the lake of fire? Whosoever is “not found written in the Book of Life.” The “fearful and unbelieving; the abominable and murderers; whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars”—all these, Holy Scripture tells us, will “have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.” Rev. xxi. 8.

If any be found in that day with Satan’s mark upon them, instead of God’s mark, “the

same shall drink of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb." Rev. xiv. 10. Not in the presence of His love and mercy, but in that of His just vengeance; for "our God is a consuming fire!" And "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night."

"Knowing the terrors of the LORD we persuade men."

JESUS came down from heaven to save us from this place of torment. Hear His voice of loving warning—"If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off and cast them from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire." "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire." "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." "O LORD God most Holy, O LORD most mighty, O holy and most merciful

SAVIOUR, deliver us not into the bitter pains
of eternal death !”

Day of wrath ! O day of mourning !
See ! once more the cross returning—
Heaven and earth in ashes burning.

O what fear man’s bosom rendeth,
When from Heaven the Judge descendeth,
On whose sentence all dependeth !

Wondrous sound the trumpet flingeth,
Through earth’s sepulchres it ringeth,
All before the throne it bringeth !

Death is struck and nature quaking,
All creation is awaking,
To its Judge an answer making !

Lo ! the books exactly worded,
Wherein all hath been recorded ;—
Thence shall judgment be awarded.

When the Judge His seat attaineth,
And each hidden deed arraigneth,
Nothing unavenged remaineth.

What shall I, frail man, be pleading ?
Who for me be interceding,
When the just are mercy needing ?

King of Majesty tremendous,
Who dost free salvation send us,
Fount of pity ! then befriend us.

Think, kind JESU,—my salvation,
 Caus'd Thy wondrous incarnation—
 Leave me not to reprobation !

Faint and weary Thou hast sought me,
 On the cross of suffering bought me ;
 Shall such grace be vainly brought me ?

Righteous Judge of retribution,
 Grant Thy gift of absolution,
 Ere that reckoning-day's conclusion.

Guilty, now I pour my moaning,
 All my shame with anguish owning ;
 Spare, O GOD, Thy suppliant groaning !

Thou the sinful woman savest—
 Thou the dying thief forgavest—
 And to me a hope vouchsafest.

Worthless are my prayers and sighing,
 Yet, good LORD, in grace complying,
 Rescue me from fires undying !

With Thy favoured sheep, O place me !
 Nor among the goats abase me,
 But to Thy Right Hand upraise me.

While the wicked are confounded,
 Doomed to flames of woe unbounded,
 Call me ! with Thy saints surrounded.

Low I kneel, with heart submission—
 See, like ashes, my contrition—
 Help me in my last condition.

Ah, that day of tears and mourning,
From the dust of earth returning,

Man for judgment must prepare him—
Spare, O GOD, in mercy spare him.

LORD, all-pitying JESU blest,
Grant us Thine eternal rest. Amen.¹

CHAPTER III.

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR AMENDMENT OF LIFE.

AND now to gain Heaven, and to escape Hell, what must we do? Repent—and amend our lives—live from henceforth to GOD, and not to ourselves.

The first step in the religious life is to know ourselves, and how we stand with GOD. This is why I have pressed the duty of self-examination upon you, and I will devote this chapter to a few more considerations on the way of conducting it.

The object to be gained by self-examina-

¹ Copyright—translated by the Rev. W. J. Irons, D.D., and taken by permission from the Hymns and Introits, No. 6. Masters.

tion is twofold—love of God, and hatred of sin.

To make a general survey of the whole life it is necessary to go back to one's earliest childhood, and to trace sins from their first beginning. You will mostly find that your worst faults began when you were very young, and went on increasing with your years. The beginning of sin is "as when one letteth out water," one cannot tell where it will stop, or whither it will flow.

For example, you began as a child to tell lies to your parents, in order to escape blame or punishment; or you repeated tales of your companions to their discredit—or you pilfered trifles that did not belong to you; or you were envious of others—liked to be finely dressed and admired—used bad words—encouraged wrong thoughts—flew into a passion, or got sulky when contradicted—were greedy, idle, revengeful, or the like.

Now if you are honest with yourself, I feel sure you will find that these faults, though small in the commencement, have grown into very serious sins.

At first, when tempted, you yielded reluctantly and not without a struggle, and some

misgivings ; now perhaps, from long habit you sin easily, and scarcely take note of when you do it.

That hesitation and early struggle, what was it? The good Spirit of God, Which you received at your baptism, striving in you against the evil spirit of sin—the voice of conscience pleading with you, and beseeching you not to offend God. Maybe the warning voice is now-a-days seldom heard in your soul—“ My Spirit shall not always strive with man,” saith the LORD.

All this shows us how dangerous the beginnings of sin are. It is so much easier to crush a sin whilst it is small than when it has grown strong. We can weed a garden with far less labour before the weeds have taken deep root in the ground.

As little strokes will fell a tree,
So little sins destroy a soul ;
O blessed LORD, I come to Thee,
From little sins to make me whole.

In making the general examination of your whole life, you will find it help you to divide your sins into two classes—sins against God, and sins against man. For although all sin is against God and offends Him greatly, yet some

sins more particularly refer to God, and some to our neighbour.

The four first Commandments concern our duty to God : the six remaining ones, our duty to our neighbour.

At the end of this tract you will find some questions, by way of suggestion, to help you to examine yourself on the Commandments ; so here I will only make a few remarks on the subject.

In the first place, you must not suppose that only the heathen worship idols. S. John, in his 1st Epistle, v. 21, speaking to Christians, says, " little children, keep yourselves from idols." Now what does this mean ?

If we put any created thing before God, and let it take His place in our hearts, whether it be children, relations, friends, money, pleasure, or the like, we are setting up idols in our hearts, and dethroning God ; it is as bad for a Christian to do this as for a heathen to set up a graven image, and fall down and worship it. " Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength ;" and anything that hinders this love and obedience is idolatry.

Again our LORD has told us, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." If we did this, how could we hate another, or slander him, or do him any injury, in soul, body, or estate ?

Few people who have sifted their past lives in the way I have suggested, will fail to learn thereby a very solemn lesson. They will see spread out before them, a countless number of sins and shortcomings ; and will perceive how, during their whole life, they have been working against God, and grieving the Holy Spirit by their waywardness and ingratitude. They could have had no idea of their own utter corruption, had they not taken their lives thus to pieces, and brought their sins one by one into the searching light of God's holy word.

They will come to realize also His patience and long suffering, Who has borne with them thus far ; and so we may hope and pray they may learn to hate sin, for the love of God, which is the use and end of self-examination.

Before I close this subject, I would say a few words on what are very improperly called "little sins." In the first place, no sin is *little* ; nothing can be small that offends God. We all know that murderers, adulterers, fornicators, drunkards, liars, and the like, if they per-

sist in their sins, must assuredly come to hell fire ; but Satan has ruined many souls by less direct means than these, and by none so surely as by causing them to think little of sin.

Small faults, if allowed to take root in the soul, will grow and expand with frightful rapidity. A man gives way to jealousy or bad temper, and he commits murder at length—he steals little things, and by degrees he comes to take great things, and to make small account of it. Or in sins against the Seventh Commandment, he permits himself in acts of immorality, which lead in the end to the breach of the entire commandment.

If people only knew how dangerous these so called small sins are, they never would commit them so lightly. When we are running down a steep place, we cannot stop at once, if we do not check ourselves by degrees, and we often go much further than we first intended. It is the same with sin ; we must put a check on it in the beginning.

Few people intend to be wicked at the outset—the Devil whispers, ‘ It is but a very small sin, you can easily draw back,’ and so they fall into his snare, and go on from bad to worse.

grievously offended, receive Thy poor sinful servant, returning at last to Thy feet. Forgive me all my sins, and blot not out my name from the book of life. Discover to me, I pray Thee, the nothingness of this world—the blessedness of heaven—the shortness of time—the duration of eternity. Grant that I may prepare for death, that I may fear Thy judgments, that I may know Thy love, that I may escape hell, and in the end attain unto heaven; through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen.

O GOD, Who rejectest not the greatest sinner, but in loving pity art reconciled to him by penitence; mercifully regard our lowly supplications, and give us strength to fulfil Thy commandments, to amend our lives, to know and to hate our sins, and to love Thee with all our hearts, through CHRIST our LORD. Amen.

O Great Physician of the soul,
To Whom the helpless pray;
We come to Thee to make us whole,
O cast not us away.

We know that once Thou mad'st us clean,
And calledst us each Thy child;
But, looking not to things unseen,
Ourselves we have defiled.

O give us grace to pray and weep,
And set ourselves with care

Henceforth Thy holy law to keep,
 Thy holy yoke to bear ;
 Henceforth to strive, each day and hour,
 Thy faithful sons to be ;
 And ne'er again to own his power
 From whom Thou mad'st us free.¹

A PRAYER BEFORE SELF-EXAMINATION.

O GOD, my Heavenly FATHER, I beseech Thee to let Thy HOLY SPIRIT shine into my heart, that I may be able to remember all my sins and shortcomings, and confess them before Thee with true sorrow and contrition. I know, O my GOD, that it will avail me nothing only to *know* my sins, if I do not hate them, and grieve for them in the bitterness of my heart. But because true repentance must be Thy gift, (from Whom all graces and good gifts do come,) I pray Thee, O FATHER, to give me a godly sorrow for having so often and so grievously offended Thee, and wasted the Blood of my dear SAVIOUR ; and help me to amend my life.

O my God, give me Thy grace, that for the future I may rather die than offend Thee again by sin.

I confess that I have sinned against heaven

¹ Neale's *Hymns for Children*.

and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy child ; but I beseech Thee, O Heavenly FATHER, for the sake of my dear SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, to forgive what is past, and to receive me back again into Thy favour. Enable me to fight against my three great enemies, the devil, the world, and the flesh ; make me to love Thee with my whole heart, and to hate sin for Thy sake. Never let me stray away from Thy fold again, and in the end bring me, I pray Thee, to everlasting life, for His sake Who died for me upon the Cross, and now liveth and reigneth with Thee and the HOLY SPIRIT, ever one GOD, world without end. Amen.

A FEW PLAIN QUESTIONS TO ENABLE A SINNER TO
EXAMINE INTO HIS PAST LIFE.

SINS AGAINST THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

Have you ever doubted whether there be a
GOD ?

Have you by your *own fault*, remained in ignorance of the great truths of religion ? not taking advantage of any opportunity to learn about them ?

If Satan has tempted you to doubt God's

power or goodness, have you tried to put away these sinful thoughts from your mind? or have you encouraged them?

Have you had rebellious thoughts against God, when He has tried you by sorrow, or pain, or sickness, or loss of those you loved, or any other affliction?

Or thought God unjust or harsh, when you have read of His dealings with sinful men in the Bible?

Or doubted that He could see you when you sinned in secret?

Have you made friends of infidels or free-thinkers, and so exposed yourself to temptation? or read bad books? or tried to prevent any one from believing in God, or loving Him, or being religious?

Have you despaired of God's mercy?

Have you wilfully gone to other places of worship, and not to the Church; either from curiosity or otherwise, and so exposed yourself to be led into error about religion?

Have you feared man more than God? and been ashamed to be religious, or to do right things, or to abstain from wrong things; lest you should be laughed at, or lest it should injure your worldly prospects?

Have you lived as if there were no God, doing your own will, sinning deliberately, and defying God? or forgetting Him?

Have you complained of God when things have gone contrary?

Have you omitted to give God the glory, when He has given you any blessing either for body or soul? or to bless Him for His mercy in not casting you before this into hell, and cutting you down in your sins; or *above all* for giving you a SAVIOUR?

Have you prayed to Him day by day, and remembered that without Him you must fall? or have you trusted in your own strength, and neglected prayer altogether?

Have you led others into sin by your evil example?

Have you employed fortune-tellers to try to learn about the future, which God has not chosen that we should know?

Or have you used any sinful means of that kind, imagining thereby to obtain any of your desires?

SECOND COMMANDMENT.

Have you ever loved any creature more than God; father, mother, husband, wife, friend,

any? or your money, or your pleasure, or your food, or anything?

Have you let your love for any person, or thing come between you and God; that is, cause you to disobey God, to neglect your prayers, or your religious duties?

Have you on their account been afraid to be religious, lest it should vex them?

Have you refused to part with them when God called them away?

Have you used sinful means to gain their love?

Or done evil to please them? or neglected for fear of offending them to tell them of any sin or sinful habit; or agreed with them out of love in anything wrong?

Has your love for any one made you jealous, or untrue, or dishonest, or angry, or idle, or sinful in any way?

In short, have you made an idol of anything, and worshipped it before God? whether a person, or a thing, or a sin, or an evil habit, or a pleasure?

When the heart is full of anything, God cannot come and dwell in that heart; and so by our *too* great love for any earthly thing, no matter how good in itself, we drive God away.

Holy Scripture particularly says we must have our treasure in heaven, that our heart may be there also; not on earth, else we should wish to live here always, and never desire to go and dwell with our dear LORD up above. It follows then, that we must not love anything more than GOD, not even our children, or those most near and dear to us,—GOD must always be the First.

We shall also have to answer to GOD, if we have not used our influence properly with those whom GOD has given us to help, or to teach by word or example; such as our children, our younger brothers and sisters, and indeed often our equals or superiors. For bad example is a very evil thing, and often leads others wrong; and sin is like a deadly fever, very catching.

THIRD COMMANDMENT.

Have you ever used any oath, or bad language of any kind, either in anger, or otherwise? This is a very great sin. Or broken your promise?

Are you in the habit of using such expressions as "O LORD," "good gracious," or such like? because GOD has said we must avoid such.

Have you ever made any joke upon words out of the Bible? Or used the Name of God lightly?

Have you laughed at religion? or made game of religious people? or read the Bible for amusement *only*, forgetting that it is God's word; or searched in it from motives of improper curiosity?

Have you laughed, or mocked in Church? or made a jest of anything there?

If you have been confirmed, how did you behave *at*, and *after* your confirmation? with respect, or with levity and irreverence?

And especially, how have you behaved at the Holy Communion? Have you believed that JESUS CHRIST Himself is present there, and acted as you should have done in the Presence of so great a King?

Have you spoken disrespectfully of God's Priests?

Made a Baptism or a Funeral the occasion of sinful feasting or drunkenness, or bad behaviour of any sort? All these things are very sinful in God's sight.

Also it is very wrong, in our prayers, or at church, when we are speaking to God, to have our thoughts elsewhere, with our worldly bu-

siness, or pleasures ; that is taking His Name in vain, just as much as swearing is, unless we strive against it, and the thoughts come un-awares. Of course if we think of *sinful* things it makes it still worse ; and to *pretend* to pray when we are *not* praying, is a great sin ; as also to *seem* to be more religious than we *really* are, for some worldly or selfish reason.

We must always study to be very true in everything ; for we are told in the Bible that liars cannot go to heaven, unless they repent and amend, any more than drunkards or thieves ; and to appear to be other than we are, is to lie.

FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

How have you spent Sunday ?

Have you tried to treat it as God's day ? abstaining from doing anything but the most necessary work ? Laying aside your trade or occupation—not buying or selling ? Have you gone regularly to church according to God's commandment ?

Have you tried to persuade your family or friends to do the same ?

Have you tried to pray and think of God on that day ? read good books, or got some one

to read to you, and endeavoured to learn your religion ?

Have you remembered your LORD'S CROSS and sufferings on Good Friday, and forborne from amusement on that most awful day ?

And have you thanked GOD for giving you His SON to be your SAVIOUR, on Christmas Day, when He came down from Heaven into this world for us, and for our salvation ?

FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

Have you obeyed your parents, treated them with respect, taken care of them when ill and old ?

Or have you been surly and unkind to them, mocked them, neglected them when sick, or old, or in want ? All these things are very displeasing to our Heavenly FATHER.

We should also examine, and see whether we have been dutiful and respectful to those who are placed over us in any way ; our masters, teachers, the ministers of GOD—and if we have obeyed the laws of the country in which we live.

We must think also how we have behaved towards our brothers and sisters, if GOD has blessed us with any ; whether we have treated

them unkindly,—injured them,—got them into trouble,—laughed at them,—set them a bad example,—refused to assist them when they were in want, or to nurse them when ill,—or to comfort them when in trouble,—or to teach and instruct them? remembering that as we have acted towards them, so will God act towards us, unless we repent and amend. And especially we must search into our hearts, and see how we stand towards all men; if we are living in charity with our neighbours? if we have any evil will against any? or if we have injured any one by word or deed?

SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

Our LORD has said that “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer,” so you must ask yourself,—first, whether you have inflicted any bodily injury upon any one; hurt them in any way; failed to help any who were in danger?

Have you desired the death of any? Caused another pain, sorrow, or misfortune; neglected any in sickness?

Have you yourself desired to die, through impatience; or tried to bring about your death, or the death of any other?

Have you been guilty of *soul* murder, by

leading any into sin ; encouraging them in sin ; or placed yourself in the way of temptation ?

Have you ever taken away a person's good name ?

Have you destroyed the happiness of another ; hated another openly, or in secret ; rendered evil for evil ?

When injured, have you nourished feelings of revenge ?

Have you given way to anger ; used abusive language,—blows ?

Have you sought to be a peacemaker, and to make up quarrels ; or have you tried to increase them ?

Have you been cruel to any human being, or to any animal ?

Have you been spiteful ? unforgiving ? called people by injurious names ? Our LORD says that those who do this are in “ danger of hell fire !”

SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

It is difficult in a book, which is intended for many different persons, to give particular questions on this Commandment. It would be better that any who may need them should ask their Clergyman to help them in this matter.

Every one will know generally whether they have offended against God's law in its plain sense ; whether in act or in thought. "Thou shalt not commit Adultery," saith the LORD ; and any sin leading to it is hateful in God's Eyes. We must examine ourselves narrowly whether we have come near to this sin ever, or led others to do it ; either by exposing ourselves to temptation or otherwise ; also, if we have been guilty of any immodesty, or impurity, whether in thought, word, or deed ; in private, or in public ?

If we have sinned with our eyes, our tongue, or our hands ?

Or in any way offended against the law of Purity ?

Many sins too lead to this : such as idleness, vanity, fine dress, love of being admired, going into loose company, reading bad books, looking at improper pictures, talking in an indecent manner, being too familiar with persons of the other sex, and so forth ; and with men as well as women, I fear the love of drink, and of company, is often a great snare, and the road which leads most surely to such sins as we are now speaking of.

If any, by God's mercy, have been preserved.

from sins of this nature, let them thank Him ; but continue to walk carefully ; for, as the Bible says, “ let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall ;” and we must ever remember that our bodies are the Temples of the HOLY GHOST.

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

Have you ever taken anything, no matter how small, which belonged to another ?

Or if you have taken anything, and repented afterwards, have you restored it ?

(To take *food* from your employers—such as tea, sugar, or the like, is a theft.)

Have you borrowed money, and not repaid it ?

Injured the property of another, wilfully, or by carelessness ?

Cheated in any way, or deceived for purposes of gain ? We may not, says the Bible, “ defraud our brother in any way.”

Have you used false weights or measures ? Sold anything above its due value ?

Been dishonest in any way either in thought, word, or act ?

Wasted the time God gave you, in which to get ready for Heaven ?

Stolen time from God, when you ought to have been praying, or at church, and given it to the world, and to pleasure ?

Cheated your parents, or defrauded your relations of their rights ?

NINTH COMMANDMENT.

Have you ever spoken evil of any, or injured their good name, or told stories to their disadvantage, or even spoken unnecessarily of their faults ?

Have you repeated evil tales of your neighbours, slandered them, liked to hear them found fault with ?

Especially have you told untruths to their discredit ? which is very dreadful indeed.

Have you told lies yourself, or kept back part of the truth, or been hypocritical in any way—how often ?

Have you by looks, or movements, or manner acted a falsehood, without speaking it in words ? Remember that to be untrue consists in making another believe something which is not a fact,—no matter how we do it.

TENTH COMMANDMENT.

First, we must examine ourselves as to the beginning of this Commandment, which says,

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife :” this would come under the head also of the Seventh Commandment ; and remember, to desire a thing that is sinful, even when we cannot commit the sin, is an evil in God’s Eyes.

Have you desired anything that was not yours,—money, dress, houses, learning,—even religion ?

Have you been jealous, or envious of the affection, or notice, or attention bestowed on others ? of their blessings, or virtues, or beauty, or goodness, and wished it for yourself ?

Have you been discontented with God’s providence, or appointments ? murmured at His dispensations, or rebelled against His will ?

PRAYER AFTER SELF-EXAMINATION.

O my LORD, I have now before me a sad picture of myself ; my sins rise before my soul in multitudes ; they are more in number than the hairs of my head, and I scarcely dare look up to Thee Whom I have so often, and so grievously offended, in thought, word, and deed.

But, LORD, I know that if Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean. I know that Thy mercy is greater than mine iniquity : therefore I beseech Thee to look upon me, Thine unworthy

servant, with pity. And although I am the very least of all Thy mercies, and not fit to be called Thy child, yet, LORD, I pray Thee to receive me back again into Thy favour; to look upon me with the Eyes of Thy Mercy; to wash me clean in Thy Most Sacred Blood; and to give me grace to walk henceforth in the path of Thy Commandments, and to love Thee with my whole heart.

This I pray for Thy tender Compassion's sake, O most Blessed LORD JESUS, my SAVIOUR and my GOD. Amen.

END OF PART III.

THE GREAT TRUTHS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

PART IV.

“WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION.”

CHAPTER I.

THAT WE MUST SHOW FORTH OUR LOVE TO GOD,
NOT ONLY IN OUR WORDS BUT BY OUR WORKS.

AFTER reading the preceding numbers of this book, you may some of you perhaps be disposed to say, ‘I had no idea religion was such a difficult thing, and gave so much trouble, or that people must *do* so much in order to become good.’

No doubt it *is* difficult to be really religious, and it *will* give trouble; few things worth having, even in this present life, are attained without persevering labour, how much less the

everlasting salvation of the soul. If religion were easy, and if people were not called upon to make sacrifices unacceptable to flesh and blood, I dare say it would be far more popular than it is in this world—and pious persons would not be so rare.

As it is, how few there are who, even for the sake of Heaven, are disposed to embrace a life of self-restraint and self-denial. They prefer to live comfortably, as they term it, and to seek their own pleasure and do their own will, and never trouble themselves about to-morrow. One thing however we may be quite sure of, and that is, they will take a very different view of the matter at the Judgment Day.

It is my earnest desire to induce you to take the same view *now* as you will *then*, with regard to the importance of leading a religious life.

Again there are persons, who although they are far from thinking lightly of religion, have taken up a wrong idea about it. They imagine it to consist only in feeling and not in acts; that we need *only* believe in order to be saved: forgetting that acts are the expression of feeling; that "Faith without works is dead being alone." They take one portion of Holy

Scripture apart from the rest, instead of taking the whole together, and so build up an easy sort of religion on a very insecure foundation.

This faith is popular, because it is easy and gives but little trouble;—besides which it is pleasing to human pride and self-indulgence; but depend upon it, it will never stand the test of the Judgment. The HOLY GHOST, by the mouth of the Apostle, teaches us a very different creed. “What doth it profit—though a man say he hath faith and have not works? Can faith save him?” “As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” S. James ii. 14, 26.

It will not avail us to cry “LORD, LORD,” to “enter into the Kingdom of Heaven;” we must also “do the will” of our FATHER, Which is in heaven (S. Matt. vii. 21), and live the life He has designed for us. We must not rest content with *believing only*, we must act up to our belief; and distrusting mere feeling, show forth our love to God by our deeds, rather than our words. A tree is known by its fruits—“of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-bush gather they grapes.” S. Luke vi. 44. We must do “works meet for

repentance"—that is, we must amend our lives and show the *reality* of our penitence by our acts.

We must be pure and peaceable—meek and gentle—forgiving and charitable—obedient and patient—loving and prayerful. Walking humbly in the Footsteps of our Blessed LORD, endeavouring to follow the example of His Holy Life, and striving to reflect His Image daily more and more in our souls. We must love Him with all our heart, and our neighbour for His sake.

We know that the "devils believe and tremble;" but this is because they *only* believe. If their lives corresponded with their belief, they would not be "reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the Judgment of the Great Day." S. Jude 6.

It is a very awful thought, that when we come to die, *only* our deeds can accompany us into another world. They will speak *for* us, or *against* us, for we shall be judged according to our works. This is why I am urging you so strongly to give yourself up to the service of God—not merely in "word, but in deed and in truth." If our good or evil deeds will at the last plead before God, either for our as-

ceptance or our condemnation, how important to lay up a store of the *former* against the “day of necessity.” We know not how near that day of dread account may be—even now it may be at our very door.

I have already said, we must consider nothing of small importance that concerns our salvation. Every word, or thought, or deed, may be a step towards Heaven or Hell. The wise man said truly, “He that contemneth small things shall fall by little and little.” Let us look narrowly to the interests of our immortal souls.

Be not disheartened as you contemplate the labour before you. If on the one hand the work of reformation be a hard one, and stands but little chance of being done whilst you rest on your belief, and neglect to shape your life accordingly; on the other hand, God is so merciful and pitiful to repentant sinners, that if He sees you are earnestly trying to serve and please Him, He will not be slow in coming to your assistance. God is very indulgent—He will bless our poorest endeavours, and accept our feeblest attempts to do His will: we ourselves may be quite dissatisfied with them, but God will not be hard upon us; He will “take

the will for the deed." Happy soul, of whom He can say (as of the poor woman in the Gospel), "She hath done what she could!"

There is an old saying that "love lightens labour." If we love God truly, nothing will be impossible to us—nothing will appear hard. Love brought God down to man, and love will lift man up to God. Love was the mainspring of the Incarnation: let it be the very key note of our religion. Then will our repentance resemble that of S. Mary Magdalene, of whom it is recorded that her sins which were many were forgiven, "because she loved much."

If men only knew the sweetness which fills a soul that has given itself *all* to God—to love Him and Him alone!

Do you think we should then have to hold out to them the fear of everlasting punishment, in order to persuade them to belong to God? Ah no,—“perfect love casteth out fear.” It would be enough to tell them that JESUS CHRIST *desired* their love—“My son, give Me thy heart!” and they would forthwith be filled with an affectionate impatience to “spend and be spent” for Him.

Nay, when they considered all He had done for them, and *how* He had loved them, they

would be ready with S. Paul to exclaim, “The love of CHRIST *constraineth* me !”—‘I cannot resist it’—‘I cannot refrain’—‘I must give myself up body and soul to Him, Who gave Himself all for me !’

Well might S. Bernard say,—

“ No tongue of mortal can express,
 No pen can write the blessedness,
 He only who hath proved it knows,
 What joy from love of JESUS flows.”

Before the Incarnation, man might have doubted whether GOD loved him ; but after the coming of the SON of GOD in the Flesh, and His Death on the Cross, who could doubt GOD’s Love ?

A blessed Saint used to say, “ The Cross and every Wound of JESUS, are so many tongues which cry to me with one accord, as well as to all mankind, ‘ CHRIST is a GOD of love ! ’ ” —“ Forget not the kindness of thy Surety,” saith the wise man, “ for He hath given His life for thee.”

“ Now he that abideth in love, abideth in GOD and GOD in him.”

Even in this life GOD bestoweth on those who love Him, a peace that passeth human un-

derstanding—what joys will not be found laid up for them, in the eternal storehouses of heaven! Let us pray with the Church, that we may ever “in heart and mind thither ascend and with Him continually dwell,” Who hath loved us, and given His life for us.

We have not seen, we cannot see,
The happy land above,
Where sin, and death, and suffering flee,
And all is peace and love.

Its sun that never goeth down,
Its streets of pearls and gold ;
Its blessed saints who wear the crown
That never groweth old.

We only see the path is long
By which we have to go ;
We only feel the foes are strong
That seek to work us woe.

We have not seen, we cannot see
The Cross our Master bore,
With all its pains, that we might be
The Devil's slaves no more.

We only think it hard to part
With very pleasant sin,
And give to GOD a perfect heart,
And make Him LORD within.¹

¹ Neale.

It hath come to pass in these latter days, what our LORD predicted (S. Matt. xxiv. 12,) "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." How different it was in the early days—we read of the first Christians being so filled with God's love, that it overflowed upon one another—they had but one heart and one soul; "neither said any that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." Acts iv. 32. It was a common remark amongst the heathen in those days, "See how these Christians love one another!"

Could such a remark be made now? Do not Christians now-a-days, on the contrary, often "give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme?" Witness the backbitings and revilings—the strife and envyings amongst us. Should we be known for members of CHRIST by our meek and gentle ways, our loving and forgiving spirit? Alas, I fear not. It is a very serious consideration to each one of us, that our evil example may deter many from embracing a religious life.

Again, how far we are from loving God with the same devotion that the early Christians did. We read of women and children suffering the

most frightful tortures, rather than deny CHRIST or give up their faith. "Many waters could not quench" their love:—nay, they "counted it all joy" when they were called upon to suffer trials and persecutions for CHRIST's sake, and rejoiced to give Him proofs of their love. Like Moses, they chose "rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Heb. xi. 25. "They loved not their lives to the death," and "esteemed the reproach of CHRIST greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt."

Some were stoned, some were burnt, some were crucified, some were given up to the wild beasts, and "others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings—yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment;" but all to no purpose, as regarded the shaking of their faith. For the love of CHRIST was more powerful than the fear of death, or the natural dread of pain. They bore their tortures "not accepting deliverance" (at the expense of truth and the salvation of their souls), "that they might obtain a better resurrection." Heb. xi. 35.

They knew that "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us,"

(Rom. viii. 18), and so they welcomed pain for JESU'S sake. They loved Him so tenderly and so unselfishly, that their dearest wish was to promote His glory; and so much did they long to dwell with Him, that the world lost all its charms for them—nay, Heaven itself would have had no attractions, had JESUS not been there!

But did JESUS die for *them* only? Did He not give "His life a ransom for many," and amongst others, for *us*? He did. Then where is *our* love, *our* gratitude, *our* devotion?

We may not be called upon in these days to suffer martyrdom for CHRIST'S sake, or to die for our faith; but how do we receive the crosses which God sends us from time to time, in the shape of sickness, bodily pain, bereavement, disappointment, contradiction, humiliation, or the like? Is our spirit *anything* like theirs who lived in the old times? Could we say with holy Job, were we stripped like him of all we possess, "The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away: blessed be the Name of the LORD;" or with the companions of S. Paul, when parting from him at Cæsarea, "The will of the LORD be done?" Can we say in our bitterest anguish, "Though He slay me, yet

will I trust in Him?" We *can* do all this "through CHRIST which strengtheneth us," for His "strength is made perfect in weakness;" but with most of us the lesson has yet to be learnt.

That is not real love, which cleaves to a friend in prosperity, and forsakes him in adversity; which loves him for his gifts and not for himself. Can we expect God to value a love which is only given Him when all things go well with us, and is taken away directly we feel the touch of the Cross? that looks to the gifts and not to the Giver? No, He requires of us a love which does not change with every wind—which says, come what may, "it is the LORD, let Him do what seemeth Him good!"

A great Saint, who was much afflicted, used to say that he could not understand how anybody could *believe* in God, and not *love* Him. Another wished she had *many* hearts instead of only *one*, that she might give them all to God. And a third so coveted suffering, as a means of becoming like his LORD, and showing forth his love to Him, that on any day which passed without bringing him trouble, he would say that "God had forgotten him!"

All these knew the truth of the old saying,

“No Cross, no Crown;” and that the more they resembled their Blessed Master in His suffering Humanity, Who was “a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,” the more sure they would be of eternal union with Him in Heaven.

“The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.”

A holy man of old, blessed Thomas à Kempis, tells us that, go where we will, we shall never find “a higher way above, or a safer way below, than the way of the Holy Cross:” the way of suffering and of love—the path of faith and obedience.

By this road JESUS travelled up to Calvary, and from thence onwards to His eternal kingdom. In like manner “our way to eternal joy is to suffer here with CHRIST, and our door to enter into life is gladly to die with CHRIST (if need be), that so we may rise again from death, and dwell with Him in everlasting life.”

THE WAY OF THE HOLY CROSS.

JESUS is toiling painfully
Along the weary road;
The way is steep, the women weep,
He falls beneath His load.

He rises, and goes on again,
With steps so faint and weak ;
They urge Him still, up that steep hill,
His death is what they seek.

He gains His journey's end at length,
Then malice works its worst ;
They loose His bands, and nail His hands
Upon the tree accurst.

They nail His feet, and raise the Cross,
A sight for all men's eyes ;
Then they deride the Crucified,
And mock Him as He dies.

There JESUS hangs in agony,
Till three long hours are told ;
Draw near, and see if woe can be
Like what you here behold !

He is thy Master and thy King,
Thy GOD, thy LORD, thy Guide ;
Dost thou complain, in want or pain ?
See then how JESUS died.

He is all Spotless and Divine,
He has a Home in bliss ;
He dies for thee, to set thee free,
Was ever love like this ?

He went from grief and pain, to Rest
From night to endless Day ; .
Seek high or low, no man can show
Thy steps another way.

If thou would'st strive with Him to dwell,
Then take the path He trod ;

Nor think it loss to bear the Cross,
 That brings thee near to GOD.
 So shall it heal thee by its touch,
 And through thy SAVIOUR'S pain
 Shalt thou find grace to see His Face,
 His heavenly Rest to gain. .
 O JESUS! strengthen us, we pray,
 That we may courage take,
 And willing bear our little share
 Of sufferings, for Thy sake.

A.

CHAPTER II.

“THE SIN THAT DOTHSO EASILY BESET US.”

THERE are many people, who, though sincerely desirous of being religious, are hindered and thrown back by want of knowing *where* or *how* to begin. Such as these would be glad of a few plain rules, to enable them to shape their daily life more in accordance with God's commandments and the example of the Saints. They see so much to *do*, and so much to *undo*, that they get quite disheartened, and are often tempted to give up the attempt altogether, as something quite beyond their reach.

And yet, in common human learning, people

are not so easily discouraged ; they don't expect to learn everything in a minute, and know that it will take time and trouble to become wise. They begin with the alphabet, and so go on working their way up gradually, until they are able to read.

Now this is just the plan they ought to adopt in *religious* learning ; namely, to begin at the beginning, and step by step “press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of GOD in JESUS CHRIST.” Steady perseverance is as much required in religion as in other things—nay more, for we have not only to acquire new habits, but often to correct old ones. We must not however grudge trouble, in order to become “wise unto salvation.”

S. Augustine said that “unless a man possessed God, he was the poorest man alive.” What we are to aim at in the religious life, is to possess GOD in JESUS CHRIST, and to be able to say with the Church in the Canticles, “My Beloved is mine, and I am His.”

A holy man was wont to say that “love made the hardest task easy.” Even human love, if it be deep and true, what wonders will it not achieve? What will hinder the lover from accomplishing the wish of his beloved?

What difficulty will deter him? What danger daunt him? Shall we love God less than we love one another? If we give Him our whole heart, and make Him, above all, our Friend and our Beloved, every obstacle will melt away. By His help we shall learn to trample upon our sins, and thus treading them under foot they will raise us up, and serve us for stepping stones to heaven.

I know that it is not *easy* to be good; I should mislead you were I to tell you so; but like many other things, it is harder in the beginning than in the end.

The Devil of course magnifies the difficulties, but do not believe him, "for he is a liar, and the father of lies;" he will deceive you if he can—many and many a poor soul has he hindered from embracing a religious life, by artifices such as these. "Be strong and of a good courage," put your hand to the work, and be sure God will bless you, and give you good success.

And now, let us consider how we may best "*work out*" our salvation, according to the Will of God. The first step, as I have already told you, must be one of reconciliation; but you **must not stop here** and think your work is over: above all, you must continue the prac-

tice of self-examination. Day by day you must look into the book of conscience, and carefully make up your spiritual accounts, noting how you stand with God, what sins you have fallen into, and what temptations, by His grace, you have overcome; from time to time balancing these accounts, in order to ascertain what bad habits you have corrected, and what good ones you have acquired. Evening by evening, before you lie down to rest, confess the sins of the past day on your knees, saying, in the words of the Psalmist,—

“Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness : and cleanse me from my sin.

“For I acknowledge my faults : and my sin is ever before me.

“Turn Thy face from my sins : and put out all my misdeeds.

“Make me a clean heart, O God : and renew a right spirit within me.

“Cast me not away from Thy Presence : and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.”

And ask God for strength to persevere in His service unto your life's end.

The merchant omits not to balance his accounts day by day and week by week—and to

calculate his gains and losses—let us imitate his diligence and carefulness, and bring it to bear on the affairs of our souls. They are far more important, and the gains and losses *there* are much more serious, for they affect our eternal welfare.

This habit of self-examination enables us to stop and consider whereabouts we are in the spiritual journey, that so, if we have taken a wrong turn, we may retrace our steps before we have gone too far astray, and get back into the right road again. Then too, it shows us what progress we are making; we note how our spiritual affairs seem to prosper, and whether we are getting nearer to Heaven and closer to God: and especially we may hope, by this practice, to acquire an increasing facility in meeting and resisting temptation, overcoming evil habits, and learning good ones.

For example, we are disposed to be lazy—to exaggerate in our speech—to be envious of our neighbour—we note the occasions, and the society which tempt us to these sins—and we avoid them if we can: If this is impossible, we pray God to help us, as we perceive the time of trial approaching, and we set ourselves to gain the opposite virtues. Thus, if our

fault be indolence, we must try to be very diligent—if it be untruthfulness, to cultivate silence and recollectedness, as in God's presence—if envy, to love our brethren as ourselves.

There are seven great sins, which are commonly called the "Seven Deadly Sins." These are 1. PRIDE; 2. ANGER; 3. LUST; 4. SLOTH; 5. GLUTTONY; 6. ENVY; 7. COVETOUSNESS.

Their opposite Virtues are 1. HUMILITY; 2. MEEKNESS; 3. CHASTITY; 4. DILIGENCE; 5. TEMPERANCE; 6. BROTHERLY-LOVE; 7. LIBERALITY. According as we are tempted to commit one of these sins, we should seek to acquire the corresponding virtue.

Do not, however, attempt too much at once, lest you be discouraged. It is often best to take one sin at a time, and direct all your efforts against *that*, till you have got it under. This had better be what Holy Scripture calls "the sin that doth so easily beset us;" or, in other words, the sin we most commonly fall into—that temptation by which the Devil most frequently causes us to offend God.

With most people this will be easily discovered, for it will stand out clearly and prominently. It will probably be some fault of *their* childhood, or of their youth, which had

they checked at the time would never have grown into a habit. You know that old, familiar saying, "A stitch in time saves nine." If young people would bear it in mind, when they are starting in life, and bring it home to their souls, what a deal of sorrow and remorse it would save them in later years !

Now there may be some who, after carefully thinking over their sins, will yet feel uncertain *which* is their besetting fault ; I should advise them not to lose time in considering, but to set to work correcting one of the worst they can find—one of those which they feel would most distress them on their death-bed. There is no doubt that each has *some* especial temptation—one has this, and another has that, but every one has his *particular* trial by which Satan vexes and harasses his soul, and causes him to offend God. This is to him the cloud which hides God's Face—the chain by which the Devil holds him back—if this one sinful passion is uprooted, not only will he be able to serve God better, but he will probably at the same time root out many other sins which are bound up with it.

It has been thought that more of a man's sins are wrought by means of his besetting sin,

than by all besides ; for sins are closely linked together, and when we yield to one, we often by so doing fall into others.

People are apt to make light of separate *acts* of sin, forgetting to add them up to see what they will amount to, say in a month or a year. For instance, you are tempted to be untruthful, or to get cross, or the like. Say, by way of example, you fall into this sin three times a day, this does not seem so *very* much taken separately, but have you ever calculated that three acts of sin a day will make exactly one thousand and ninety-five acts of that especial sin in the course of only one year ? This puts the matter in a very solemn point of view as regards the day of final account.

Of course, God could in one moment convert a sinner, without all this labour and trouble ; like the penitent thief on the Cross, or S. Paul the Apostle, who was changed at once from an adversary of CHRIST into a saint ; but GOD very rarely does this, and we must not expect it in our own case. In perhaps ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, spiritual progress will be slow and toilsome, and we shall have to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling."

Let us not forget to "be instant in prayer." No advance can be made in religion without prayer. We are so weak of ourselves, that all our attempts to be good and to overcome sin would come to nothing if God did not help us. There is a most encouraging promise made to those who pray in faith. "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." S. Matt. xxi. 22.

When you feel the approach of temptation, say in your heart very earnestly, "O God, make speed to save me! O LORD, make haste to help me!"—"Be not far from me, O my God. Give me strength to overcome in Thy Name."

Having decided what your chief temptation is, morning by morning commit yourself to God's care, and ask Him to enable you to conquer it. In the evening, if you have been overtaken by this or by any other fault, beg Him to forgive you, and help you to do better on the following day. If you have by God's grace escaped grievous sin during the day, thank God for it very humbly, saying, "Not unto me, O LORD, but unto Thee be the glory and the praise."

Do not remit your diligence for any consi-

but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 1 Cor. iv. 17.

Nothing happens by chance, or comes to us by accident; we should always bear that in mind. Everything is either ordered or permitted by God for our benefit; as we use His Dispensations or abuse them, so will they either further or hinder our eternal salvation. Try to discern the Finger of God in all things, and refer all to Him. We are in the hands of a tender Father, who will cause all to "work together for good to them that love Him."

Not a single sight we view,
Not a single deed we do,
Not a single word we say,
Every hour of every day,

Not one action, or intent
Comes by chance, or comes unent—
God, That hears His people's call,
Sees and overrules them all.

When we know not where to go,
'Tis enough for Him to know;
Are there fears on every side?
Let us trust,—and He will guide.

Does He make our wishes vain?
'Tis because the loss is gain:

diately under the Eye of the Almighty, and even our most secret thoughts are not hid from His knowledge.

This consideration ought to make us very careful and circumspect; and did we bear it always in mind, not only would it check us often on the brink of sin, but it would comfort us under any trials God might please to send us. To endure our afflictions, be they poverty, sickness, pain, loneliness, bereavement—under the very Eye of JESUS CHRIST, and to know that if we are patient and conformed to His Will, we shall assuredly have our SAVIOUR'S approval and sympathy—how would that sweeten every sorrow, and lighten every trial!

None can fathom the depths of His Tenderness and Love. JESUS is “full of compassion and mercy,” and never “willingly afflicts”—nay, so great is His sympathy with us that “in all our afflictions He is afflicted.” He sends us crosses for our eternal good, and if we use them properly they will be to us so many stepping-stones to Everlasting Rest. We do not know their value now, but we shall know hereafter. It is not that suffering in itself, apart from CHRIST, has any value, but united to Him and to His Passion, “our light affliction which is

but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 1 Cor. iv. 17.

Nothing happens by chance, or comes to us by accident; we should always bear that in mind. Everything is either ordered or permitted by God for our benefit; as we use His Dispensations or abuse them, so will they either further or hinder our eternal salvation. Try to discern the Finger of God in all things, and refer all to Him. We are in the hands of a tender Father, who will cause all to "work together for good to them that love Him."

Not a single sight we view,
 Not a single deed we do,
 Not a single word we say,
 Every hour of every day,

Not one action, or intent
 Comes by chance, or comes unent—
 God, That hears His people's call,
 Sees and overrules them all.

When we know not where to go,
 'Tis enough for Him to know;
 Are there fears on every side?
 Let us trust,—and He will guide.

Does He make our wishes vain?
 'Tis because the loss is gain:

Does He stop us in our way ?

'Tis because 'tis best to stay.

When we suffer want or grief,

He at once could send relief :

He could send it ;—and He would

Were not suffering for our good.¹

Another habit we must seek to acquire is **PRAYER**—diligent, constant, persevering prayer. The Holy Scriptures are urgent in pressing this upon us. “ Pray without ceasing ; ” “ continue instant in prayer ; ” “ men ought always to pray and not to faint ; ” “ in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. ” “ In the evening and the morning, and at noonday will I pray, and that instantly, ” says the Psalmist ; and almost our Blessed LORD’s last words to His disciples were, “ Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. ”

God has promised much to prayer : “ Ask and ye shall have, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. ” “ Whatsoever ye shall ask the FATHER in My Name, He will give it you, ” saith our LORD ; and yet how few people *really* pray. They say a few formal words, and *call* it praying,

¹ Neale.

but they don't go to God for all they need, or tell Him their cares, and troubles, and perplexities, and spread them out before Him as they might.

A story is told of a poor negro slave, in one of the West Indian plantations, which will illustrate my meaning. She served a very harsh and cruel master, and had to work hard all the week; but on Sundays she contrived to steal away for an hour or two to the Church of the Mission to attend Divine Service. This was found out, and she was severely taken to task by her master, and forbidden to go any more. Her meek reply was, "I must tell the LORD that;" an answer which so touched her owner, that he no longer denied her permission to go.

It is not that God does not know our necessities, without our telling Him, but He wills that we should come to Him for all we want, and depend upon Him for everything. Our prayers are dear to Him, for He is our FATHER, and He loves us with a father's love. When we utter our poor petitions here (if they come from our hearts), angels carry them up to Heaven. You may remember how, in the Revelation, it is said, "The smoke of the incense

which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand."

We miss thousands of blessings for want of asking for them. By prayer we can do all things, bear all things, believe all things. S. Augustine called it "the key of heaven." There is nothing that God Almighty will refuse to earnest prayer, save that only which would do us harm, or cause us to come short of our eternal reward. A great Saint was wont to say, "The powers of hell are strong, but prayer is stronger still," for

"Satan trembles, when he sees
The feeblest saint upon his knees."

Prayer will change sinners into saints. God wills to save us, but He waits for us to ask Him. "If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us; and if we know that He hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." 1 S. John v. 14, 15.

It was thus that Martyrs obtained strength to overcome their torments, and to endure unto the end amidst the most appalling tortures; that Confessors were enabled, with such amazing

courage, to declare their faith in CHRIST before the heathen, and in the face of death itself. We may in like manner gain power to triumph over sin, the world, and the devil, and to win the victor's crown at length.

If GOD Almighty were like the kings of this earth, and granted audience only occasionally—say every month, or some few times in the year—we might well think *that* a great privilege and condescension, and be eager to avail ourselves of it. What, when He gives continual audience, and is at any moment ready to listen to us? “The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon Him: yea all such as call upon Him faithfully.” Ps. cxlv. 18. Nay He anticipates our prayers. “Thus saith the LORD, Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking, I will hear.”

We have only to ask in order to become rich in graces and blessings; for all the treasures of Heaven are thrown open to us. It is true God may sometimes *seem* to be deaf to our petitions, but this is only a greater proof of His love. We ask perhaps for some earthly favour, or we seek to be delivered from some present trial, and He, in His wisdom, *knows* that to grant our prayer would be to *do us*

harm. He is the great Physician of souls, and knows better than we do what will do us good and what harm. He says to us, "What I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter."

Now let us consider a little *how* we are to pray, and make known our requests to God. People have an idea, and a most mistaken one it is, that if they pray at certain stated times, and go through a certain form of words, they have done all that is necessary. Now the real fact is, that as we cannot do anything well without God's assistance, we ought to be *continually* praying. The Bible says, whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we should do all "to the glory of God." We must be always trying to please Him, and fearing to offend Him, and that in small, as well as in great things.

The custom of asking a blessing upon what we are about to do is very helpful; for we could hardly do it before anything wrong. "LORD JESUS, bless what I am going to do," when beginning any employment; and "LORD, forgive what I have done amiss in this," afterwards, would keep the mind recollected, and act as a check upon us, reminding us of God's

presence, and of our own weakness and need of support.

It is also very useful, with a view to this, to pause sometimes in the midst of an occupation, saying to ourselves, in the words of Holy Scripture, "Thou, GOD, seest me."

Do not fancy you must be a scholar to be able to pray. This is quite a mistake. Tell God in the most simple words all your wants, all your troubles. Hide nothing from Him; ask Him to make you good, to teach you how to serve Him; to forgive you all your sins; to help you to love Him; and to bring you to everlasting life. Never mind what sort of language you use, only let your prayer come from your heart, and it will be sure to be acceptable to Him, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST your SAVIOUR. Let your manner, however, be very reverent, and say your prayers meekly kneeling on your knees. Remember, though you are speaking to your heavenly FATHER, He is God Almighty also, the King of Heaven and earth.

If you can read, it may be useful to learn a few psalms and hymns, and texts of Scripture, by heart. They will serve to repeat when you are lying awake at night, or on a sick bed, and

will drive away bad thoughts and keep the mind fixed on God.

Psalms vi., xxxii., xxxviii., li., cii., cxxx., and cxliii. are especially meant for penitents, being prayers for pardon, and thanksgiving for God's forbearance towards them. They are called the "Penitential Psalms."

Of a MORNING, Psalms v., lxiii., cxiii., cxxiii., or cxlv. are very appropriate, with this Hymn.

Awake, my soul, and with the sun,
Thy daily course of duty run ;
Shake off dull sloth, and early rise,
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

Redeem the mis-spent moments past,
And live this day as if the last ;
Thy talents to improve, take care,
For the great Day thyself prepare.

Let all thy converse be sincere,
Thy conscience as the noon day clear ;
For GOD'S all-seeing eye surveys
Thy secret thoughts, thy words and ways.

LORD, I my vows to Thee renew,
Scatter my sins like morning dew ;
Guard my first springs of thought and will,
And with Thyself my spirit fill.

Direct, control, suggest this day,
All I design, or do, or say ;

That all my powers, with all their might,
In Thy sole glory may unite.

Praise GOD, from Whom all blessings flow ;
Praise Him, all creatures here below ;
Praise Him above, angelic host :
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.

Of an EVENING, Psalm iv., *first six verses of*
Psalm xxxi., or Psalms xci. and cxxxiv., with
a Hymn.

Almighty GOD, to-night
To Thee for help we pray ;
To Whom the darkness is as light,
And midnight as the day.

Thy tender love and care,
Prepares our peaceful bed ;
But Thou, O SAVIOUR, hadst not where
To lay Thy sacred Head.

Oh, keep us now from harm,
As Thou hast done before ;
And let Thine everlasting arm
Be round us evermore.

Let holy angels stand
About us every night ;
Until they bear us to the land
Of everlasting light.¹

Or this Hymn.

Sun of my soul, Thou SAVIOUR dear,
It is not night if Thou art near ;

¹ Neale.

O, may no earth-born cloud arise,
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes.

When the soft dew's of kindly sleep,
My wearied eyelids gently steep ;
Be my last thought how sweet to rest
For ever on my SAVIOUR'S Breast.

Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without Thee I cannot live ;
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without Thee I dare not die.

Psalm xxii. might be used on Friday, as it speaks of our Blessed LORD's sufferings and death. Psalm xxiii. on Sundays, for it refers to the new and hidden life we should lead with Him on earth, and of our eternal rest in heaven. Also Psalm lxxxiv., which is a thanksgiving for Church privileges.

Another pious custom I would commend to you (it is a subject for deep regret that it has fallen so much into disuse)—to remember the hours in the day when our LORD suffered for us in His bitter Passion, by using His own Prayer and some text out of Holy Scripture, and, if time will allow, a hymn.

Thus, NINE o'clock in the MORNING, was the Hour when JESUS was scourged and crowned with thorns, and arrayed in the pur-

ple robe of scorn—according to the old Bible method of reckoning time, this is called the

THIRD HOUR.

You might say the LORD'S Prayer and this Text—"He was wounded for our transgressions : He was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon Him ; and with His Stripes we are healed." Isa. liii. 5.

By Thine agony of grief,
 By Thy pleading for relief,
 By Thy purple robe of scorn,
 By Thy wounds, Thy crown of thorn ;
 Sun of Righteousness whose Brow
 Mortals strove to darken o'er ;
 Thou to whom the mockers bow,
 Thou whose Back the thongs begore ;
 Thee we ask with earnest heed,
 Pour on us Thy saving grace ;
 Deign in pity us to lead,
 Till we see Thee Face to face.

If you are not able to be alone at these times, and cannot kneel, prostrate yourself in heart and will, and GOD will accept your intention.

TWELVE o'clock at NOON, is what was anciently called the

SIXTH HOUR.

(The time when JESUS was nailed to the Cross.)
 Say the LORD'S Prayer and this Text—"They
 pierced my hands and my feet; I may tell all
 my bones: they stand staring and looking
 upon me." Ps. xxii. 17.

In the LORD'S atoning grief,
 Be our rest, and sweet relief;
 Store we deep in heart's recess,
 All the shame and bitterness;
 Thorns, and cross, and nails, and lance,
 Wounds, our treasures that enhance;
 Vinegar, and gall, and reed,
 And the pang His soul that freed.
 Crucified we Thee adore,
 Thee with all our hearts implore,
 Us with saintly bands unite
 In the realms of heavenly light.

THREE o'clock in the AFTERNOON, is the
 Hour when JESUS died. It was called the

NINTH HOUR.

Use again the LORD'S Prayer and this Text—
 "He became obedient unto death: even the
 death of the Cross." Phil. ii. 8.

O'erwhelmed in depths of woe,
 Upon the tree of scorn,
 Hangs the Redeemer of mankind,
 With racking anguish torn.

See! how the nails those hands
And feet so tender rend,
See down His face, and neck, and breast,
His sacred Blood descend!

Hark with what awful cry
His Spirit takes its flight;
That cry it pierced His mother's heart,
And whelmed her soul in night.

Come, fall before His Cross,
Who shed for us His Blood;
Who died to save us from our sins,
And bring us back to God.

By means of this practice of keeping the Hours of our LORD's Passion, the thought of it will ever be present with you; and you will cultivate an affectionate remembrance of all He has done and suffered for you.

Before I close this chapter, I would suggest one other custom, which I feel sure will be helpful to you. It is that of darting up to GOD throughout the day little secret prayers, or "EJACULATIONS," as they are called. For example, when the clock strikes, or when you are going to set about some fresh employment.

People who have very little time for regular prayer will find this habit especially useful to

them; for they can thus pray even in the midst of their ordinary occupations, and will find it a help, rather than a hindrance.

I will subjoin a few of these "Ejaculations," for various occasions, taken for the most part from Holy Scripture. You can choose such of them as seem most fitted to your needs.

For Penitents.

"LORD, be merciful to me a sinner!"

"For Thy Name's sake, O LORD, be merciful to my sin, for it is great."

"Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

"Cast me not away from Thy Presence: take not Thy HOLY SPIRIT from me."

In time of sorrow, temptation, or perplexity.

"Go not far from me, O LORD, for trouble is hard at hand, and there is none to help."

"The sorrows of my heart are enlarged, O bring Thou me out of my trouble."

"Look upon my adversity and misery, and forgive me all my sin."

"Help me, O LORD, for in Thee do I put my trust."

“Deliver me from mine enemies, O LORD, for I flee unto Thee to hide me.”

“Forsake me not, O LORD my GOD; haste Thee to help me.”

“LORD, make Thy way plain before my face.”

“Teach me to do the thing which pleaseth Thee, O my GOD.”

If tempted to untruth, evil speaking, or angry words.

“Deliver me, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.”

“LORD, keep the door of my lips, that I offend not with my tongue.”

When striving against sin, and longing to love God.

“Hold Thou up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.”

“Keep Thy servant also from presumptuous sins.”

“LORD, lift up Thine Hand; forget not the poor.”

“How long wilt Thou forget me, LORD; how long wilt Thou hide Thy Face from me?”

“Whom have I in Heaven but Thee, or upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee?”

When going to sleep (which is an image of death), or in sickness.

“Lighten mine eyes that I sleep not in death.”

“LORD, into Thine hands I commend my spirit.”

“LORD, make Thou all my bed in my sickness.”

In affliction, for union with God's Will.

“Not as I will, but as Thou wilt.”

“It is the LORD, let Him do what seemeth Him good.”

“Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.”

“The will of the LORD be done.”

In thanksgiving to God for mercy.

“I will praise God because He hath dealt so lovingly with me.”

Before Prayer.

“Hear my prayer, O GOD, and give ear to the words of my mouth.”

“LORD, teach me to pray, and let Thy Holy Spirit pray within me.”

On Friday.

“Let not Thy holy Passion be in vain for me, O LORD, by reason of the hardness of my heart.”

“May the Blood of CHRIST’S Passion unlock for me the Gates of Heaven !”

“Set Thy Passion, Cross, and Death, O LORD, between the judgment and my poor soul.”

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRACTICE OF MENTAL PRAYER.

“BLESSED is the man that doth meditate good things in wisdom : and that reasoneth of holy things by his understanding.” Ecclus. xiv. 20.

There is a way of praying which is called MEDITATION, or MENTAL PRAYER. It is made up of reading, thinking, and praying, and was one of the means by which the Saints made such rapid progress in the knowledge and love of God. This is how you must set about it.

Choose some quiet place and time, when you are least likely to be disturbed. Take a small portion out of one of the four Gospels—a few verses would be enough. Some account of our Blessed LORD’S sufferings for instance ; His agony in the Garden—the denial of S. Peter—the scourging and crowning with thorns—the nailing to the Cross—His last dying words as

He hung thereon for those three weary hours of torture; or you might choose one of His Miracles, or Parables, or part of one of His Discourses—the Sermon on the Mount, for example. S. Matt. v. vi. vii.

Read the passage over very slowly and attentively, asking first the light of GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT to teach you the meaning of it. Try and picture the scene to your mind—imagine yourself present, and think you hear our LORD'S Voice, and see His Form. Then consider what He would teach you by this lesson—what precept of humility, patience, obedience, faith, long suffering, or conformity to GOD'S will—and how you have hitherto been practising it. In conclusion, resolve to bring it to bear upon your life for the future, and ask God to help you to carry out this intention.

It is a great mistake reading so quickly and saying prayers like a parrot,—without stopping to consider the meaning. If we were to swallow our food without chewing, it would not digest or do us any good; and it is the same with spiritual things. A few prayers said thoughtfully; a little reading, read carefully, is worth many prayers and much reading, to which we give but little heed.

A good Lady who lived many years ago, suggested a useful way of meditating for those who could not read. I will try and explain it to you. Take the **LORD'S PRAYER**, which every Christian may be supposed to know, and begin,

OUR FATHER.

Here stop and consider what a blessing it is to have **GOD** for our **FATHER**, and to be His children—how condescending of Him to allow us to call Him **FATHER**—what a sweet Name it is, so full of love—what ungrateful children we are—how from henceforth *you* must try to be more worthy of such a Father, and to be more united to His Holy will.

Think how He has given His **SON JESUS CHRIST** to die for us, in order to save us from eternal death ; and that “ as a father pitieth his own children, even so is **GOD** merciful unto them that fear Him.”

FATHER, from Thy Throne on high
Listen to Thy children's cry ;
Children of immortal birth,
Though we linger yet on earth ;
FATHER, bring us in Thy love
To our home in **HEAV'N** above.

T.

WHICH ART IN HEAVEN.

What must **HEAVEN** be, if even this earth is

so beautiful, and GOD'S works here below are so glorious!—what must that beauty be, that can never fade or decay ?

Where everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers.

There, we shall see the holy Angels, and all those blessed Saints we read of in the Bible. There, we shall see JESUS and shall never more offend Him. GOD is in one sense everywhere—“His mercy is over all His works.” But HEAVEN is His Dwelling Place. There He abideth in an especial manner. GOD is love—where He is must be the abode of love, and peace, and joy—“He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in GOD and GOD in him”—If I would dwell with GOD in HEAVEN, I must try and acquire this holy love.

Pray GOD to fit you for your heavenly Home, and to bring you there. Remember JESUS died to gain it for you ; and in your Baptism you were made “an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.”

What is HEAVEN ? can words express
Its transcendent loveliness ?
Light of never-ending day,
Joys that never pass away.
FATHER, let each restless heart,
Seek and find Thee WHERE THOU ART.

HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

Think of the adoration of the Angels, who veil their faces with their wings, as they say, "Holy, Holy, Holy, LORD GOD Almighty"—How the Church on earth echoes these words in the "Te Deum." Think how often you may have profaned GOD'S Holy NAME by using it lightly or irreverently, or by wandering thoughts in prayer. Remember that GOD will "not hold him guiltless that taketh His NAME in vain." Resolve for henceforth to honour and revere IT, and to pray that IT may be HALLOWED throughout the world.

HALLOW'D BE THY NAME, O LORD,
 By angelic hosts adored ;
 We our feeble voices raise,
 Echoing back their notes of praise.
 When we join that heavenly throng,
 We shall learn the angels' song.

T.

THY KINGDOM COME.

Think if GOD'S "way could be known upon earth, His saving health unto all nations," how different this world would be. Are *you* trying to advance and extend His KINGDOM, by your prayers, your influence, your example? Our LORD says, "the Kingdom of GOD is within

you." Are you striving to make His words true of yourself? Does He reign in your heart? Ask Him to come and dwell in you, and to tread down His enemies (even your sins) under His Feet, and to destroy their Chief,—your besetting sin. Resolve that from henceforth you will have no other King but JESUS. "O LORD my GOD, other lords have had dominion over me," but from this time forth I will have none other GOD but Thee.

Let Thy way on earth be known,
SAVIOUR, claim and keep Thine own;
Well-spring of eternal day,
To each heart Thy Light convey.
LORD, destroy the power of sin,
Let THY KINGDOM COME within.

T.

THY WILL BE DONE.

The blessed Angels have no will. GOD'S WILL is theirs. Our Blessed LORD had no will, when on earth. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me; and to finish His work." In the depth of His untold agony, His words were, "FATHER, not My will, but Thine be done." Are *you* trying to gain this spirit of patience and union with the will of GOD? It is possible even on earth; holy men have found it so, and

have said in the hour of anguish, "The will of the LORD be done." "The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be His Name." Resolve from now to have no will but God's will—and, like the blessed Angels, to "fulfil His commandments and hearken to the voice of His words," and deplore your many rebellions against His Dispensations.

JESU, Who Thyself hast trod
Sorrow's path that leads to GOD;
Teach us so to bear our pain,
That we turn it all to gain;
Let our will with Thine be one,
Make us say, THY WILL BE DONE.

T.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.

Take no anxious thought for the morrow—God will provide. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of GOD." Trust Him to supply all your wants. There is a "Bread which cometh down from Heaven," and nourisheth unto eternal life. "LORD, evermore give me this BREAD!" Be not careful or troubled about your daily needs—our Blessed LORD fed thousands in the wilderness with five

barley loaves and a few small fishes—will He not feed and sustain *you* also ?

Resolve from henceforth to “cast all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.” Beg Him to feed your soul and body, and to preserve them to everlasting life.

Thou who dost the needs supply
Of the ravens, as they cry ;
And in deserts wild hast fed,
Thousands with their DAILY BREAD ;
Nourish from Thy bounteous store,
Soul and body evermore.

T.

FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES.

Reflect upon your sins, and beg GOD to forgive them. Thank Him for giving His only SON to die for our sins. We must forgive others, if we would hope, for CHRIST’S sake, to be forgiven ourselves ; Our Blessed LORD prayed for His very murderers—so did S. Stephen the first martyr. Are you in charity with all men ? If you cannot forgive your brother his trespasses, how can you expect your Heavenly FATHER to forgive you your trespasses ?

From henceforth resolve, as much as in you lies, to “live peaceably with all men”—to love your enemies and do good to them who

injure you—forgiving all “even as God for, CHRIST’s sake hath forgiven you.”

Bow’d beneath the weight of sin,
 Satan’s power yet strong within ;
 LORD, OUR TRESPASSES FORGIVE,
 Bid Thy trembling suppliants live.
 May we grant that pardon free,
 That we ask, O LORD, from Thee.
 T.

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.

GOD will not “suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear”—He will “with the temptation make a way of escape.” Our LORD “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” The Saints were tempted and overcame, in the power and by the help of GOD.

Think what your particular temptation is—it is the battle field in which you are to fight against the enemies of GOD. JESUS, the Captain of your salvation, is looking on, and ever ready to aid you.

Put on the armour of GOD, described, Ephes. vi. In your Baptism you enlisted as a soldier of CHRIST, and promised to “fight manfully under His Banner against sin, the world, and *the devil.*” How are you fulfilling your en-

gement? Ask Him to give you strength to resist the devil, and to overcome him. Resolve never to make terms with the enemies of the LORD.

In TEMPTATION'S battle-field,
 May we rather die than yield,
 Clad in Christian armour bright,
 Strong in JESUS' power and might,
 May His standard, borne on high,
 Lead us on to victory.

T.

BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.

Pray God to deliver you from sin and from eternal death. There is no EVIL like that. Ask Him to temper afflictions to you, and to assuage them to your eternal welfare. Nothing can really harm you, but separation from God. Resolve never to let anything do that. Do not create imaginary evils, or murmur at what God sends you. Ask for a placid temper. How have you hitherto taken God's appointments? "All things work together for good to them that love God." "I will fear no evil, Thou art with me."

What, O LORD, can EVIL be,
 To the soul that trusts in Thee?

Sin and Satan cannot harm
One who leans upon Thine arm :
Death itself but sets us free,
Gate of life and liberty.

T.

Such a method of praying as the above is useful both for the educated and uneducated. It is simple and easy, and may be soon learnt, and the plan may be applied to other devotions as well as to our LORD'S own Prayer.

The great S. Augustine was used to say that the two wings of Prayer were FASTING and ALMSGIVING; and that these gave our devotions *reality*, and wafted them up to the throne of Almighty God.

I suppose every one, be he never so poor, may deny himself in *something* for the love of JESUS CHRIST, in order to become more like Him, "Who for our sake did fast forty days and forty nights." Our Blessed LORD gives some particular directions about fasting in S. Matt. vi.

The season of Lent is especially set apart by the Church for this purpose, being the forty days immediately preceding the great festival of our LORD'S Resurrection, which is called EASTER. She directs us to "use such ab-

stinence, that our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey His godly motions in righteousness and true holiness.”

We continually read in the Bible of fasting coupled with prayer, and it has ever been considered an expression of penitence and self-abasement for sin.

As regards ALMSGIVING, this duty is also particularly enjoined in Holy Scripture; and although a special privilege of the rich, it may be shared in a measure by the poor. We know the blessing on the cup of cold water given in the Name of the LORD, and on the widow's mite—all the more precious in the sight of God, from being the fruits of love and self-denial.

There are few who cannot find means of ministering to the wants of others. A word, or look of sympathy, is often better than a gift. If you have no money, you may give time; or maybe, share your food with one in need. Or you may sacrifice some amusement, or curtail your rest to sit up with a sick neighbour, or comfort one in affliction. As we do unto others, so will God do unto us. “As ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me,” saith the LORD.

I have spoken much of the necessity of *private* prayer, but I would not seem to exclude *public* worship—going to church—frequenting the services in God's House. You will find full directions about these in the Book of Common Prayer, so I need not enter very fully into them. "My house shall be called the house of prayer unto all nations," saith the LORD; and S. Paul exhorts all Christians not to forsake the "assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is." There is an especial privilege attached to it, for JESUS CHRIST Himself says, "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them."

GOD will bless those who frequent His House, and behave themselves reverently there, and that not only on Sundays, but on week-days also when opportunity is given. "Why is the house of God forsaken?" "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: for one day in Thy courts is better than a thousand! O go your way into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise."

And now remember that your *life* must correspond with your prayers. You must not *only* glorify God, but you must edify your

neighbour. Strive to be very meek and patient, "not rendering railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing." Never permit yourself in angry or unkind words. If others do us any injury, we must always remember our LORD's command to do good for evil. He Himself was "meek and lowly of heart;" "Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered He threatened not," but prayed for them which despitefully used Him and persecuted Him.

GOD does not will the wickedness of the wicked, but He often permits it, in order to try the constancy of the good. The more you try to realize that GOD orders *everything*, and that nothing can happen unless He allows it, the better you will be able to meet and bear those contrary things which may be sent for your trial and your discipline.

GOD knows all things—every little ache and pain of your body, and each anguish of your heart; the pinchings of poverty; the weariness of sickness; the cares of children; the pain of bereavement; the injuries of men; all you suffer is noted by Him—nothing is lost upon Him. He feels for you, and pities you, and treasures up in the book of His remembrance

every sigh and every tear. According as you have borne your Cross here, so will your Crown be hereafter.

The sunset's golden glory
 Gilds many a stormy day,
 And clouds, e'en by their weeping,
 Give flowers fresh and gay ;
 The brightest tinted rainbows
 Are drops, once cold and grey.

These things from God are tokens,
 That if we trust and wait,
 Though life be long and weary,
 Its blessing will come late ;
 That though earth's way be dreary,
 'Twill lead to Heaven's gate.

E.

Never murmur against God's dispensations, either directly or indirectly. Receive joy and sorrow alike from His hand with cheerful patience. If He give you to drink of His cup of suffering, be sure it is because He loves you, and would make you like Himself. You must struggle through the briars and thorns of this present life, before you can reach the flowery meadows of Paradise. *Here* the Cross, and *there* the Crown. Suffer here with JESUS, if you would be glorified with Him in Heaven. Rest on His Breast, like the beloved disciple,

and will what He wills. Look up to Heaven, and see with the eye of faith JESUS watching you from His throne on high—approvingly, if you carry your Cross lovingly—sorrowfully, if you seek to cast it from you.

To each of us God gives the particular trial his soul needs, to fit it for its heavenly resting-place. Were you to choose for yourself, or were even one who loved you dearly to choose for you, the choice were surely far less good. JESUS has your salvation at heart, and orders all things in your life accordingly. This thought might well turn sorrow into joy, and sadness into gladness.

Remember too, in every trial, that nothing can really harm you whilst you hold fast by God. JESUS sends us no affliction that He did not first bear Himself for us. If we be poor, and lack many comforts, and have to toil and labour for our daily bread, JESUS was poor also, and had not “where to lay His head.” If we have to put up with the infirmities of others, had He not to bear the contradiction of sinners? JESUS was poor and despised upon earth; “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.”

The way of eternal life is strait and narrow; the less we have to carry of this world's goods,

as we journey along it, the better. "Blessed are ye poor," saith the LORD, "for yours is the kingdom of heaven." There are those who have made themselves poor for CHRIST's sake, and because of that saying, "How hardly shall they who have riches enter into the kingdom of God."

We may not desire to travel to Heaven by an easier road than our Master. "He went not up to joy before He suffered pain." At the most we have but a few years to carry our Cross, and then will come eternal rest. "Sorrow endureth for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Suffering is the medicine of the soul. The heavenly Physician gives it "according to His excellent wisdom." "Not a sparrow can fall to the ground without our FATHER," and we are "of more value than many sparrows."

Precious beyond all things here on earth, in God's sight, is the soul of man. To create the world cost God Almighty but a word—to redeem it, cost Him His only SON.

CHAPTER V.

THE SEAL OF THE LORD.

“Grieve not the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD, whereby ye are *sealed* unto the day of redemption.”—Ephes. iv. 30.

I AM now about to speak to you of another Means of Grace, provided for us in CHRIST’S holy Church. It is called CONFIRMATION, or the “laying on of hands.” You are doubtless already familiar with the name of this Rite, but may not be aware of its nature, or of the benefits conferred in it. Before, however, I enter more fully into these, I must speak to you a little more particularly of the Third Person of the ever-blessed Trinity—God the HOLY GHOST—Whom we receive in a very special manner in this Ordinance.

You will find Him spoken of in the Creed as proceeding from the FATHER and the SON, “Who with the FATHER and the SON together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the prophets.” Let us see what mention is made of Him in the Bible. First, in the Book of Genesis, in the account of the creation of

the world, we read, that the Spirit of God "moved," or to use a more correct expression, "brooded" over the dark, void, shapeless waste, and light, and beauty, and harmony burst forth into being; "and God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good." Then "the morning stars sang together; and all the Sons of God shouted for joy."

After the Fall of man, the HOLY GHOST withdrew His abiding Presence from the earth, and only in individual cases, and on particular occasions, is mention made of His operations. Still God "left not Himself without witness," for holy men of old "spake as they were moved by the HOLY GHOST;" and we know that wherever any good and acceptable work is, there the Spirit of God must be.

It was the INCARNATION that brought back this Holy Presence to mankind. In the Person of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." When He the God-man humbled Himself for our sake, and though without sin, was baptized in the river Jordan, "the Heaven was opened," and the Spirit of God descended like a dove, and lighted upon Him; and we read further on,

S. Luke iv. 1, that He was “full of the HOLY GHOST.”

Now this was an earnest or first-fruits of the great Gift, Which after our LORD'S Ascension was showered down upon the Church. On the Eve of His Passion, when our Blessed LORD was about to withdraw His bodily Presence from His Disciples, and their hearts were troubled, He consoled them with this assurance, “I will pray the FATHER, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth.” —“He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” —“It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. He will guide you into all truth.”

After His Resurrection our LORD appeared to the Apostles and commanded them to await His Promise in Jerusalem. This they did, and “continued with one accord in prayer and supplication until the Day of Pentecost (Whit-sunday), when, according to the word of the LORD, the promise was fulfilled, and the HOLY GHOST descended upon the Church, never more

to depart. Acts ii. This great Gift is, as you know, imparted to each individual member of CHRIST'S Body the Church in his Baptism, when he is made a "child of God;" it is *then* that the HOLY SPIRIT "broods" over the dark waste, blasted by "Original Sin," and transforms it into the light and beauty of GOD'S restored image. This is the "New Creation," when the creature, "dead in trespasses and sins," is quickened and raised up to all the privileges of its new birth.

We can form some idea of the work of the HOLY GHOST in the soul of man, by considering the types under which He is spoken of in the Scriptures. We will take three of these—Water, Fire, and Air. The natural property of Water is to cleanse and purify, to satisfy thirst, to refresh the weary; and in its gentle forms of rain and dew, to cause herbs and flowers to spring forth into life and beauty, making a barren land fruitful. So in the *soul*, the Spirit of GOD cleanses from sin, satisfies its inmost longings, refreshes it when weary; and by the soft dew of grace makes its dryness and desolation fruitful in good works.

To what is Fire applied in the natural world? To warm, to cheer, to lighten. The HOLY

GH^oST warms the soul with heavenly love, cheers and comforts it amidst this world's coldness, and lightens it on its spiritual journey, making it to know and follow after righteousness.

The "rushing, mighty Wind," what is its office? See you ship becalmed—its course stopped—the sails idly flapping against the mast, and all at a stand-still! Suddenly the wind rises, the sails fill, the crew take heart, the vessel sails nobly onwards towards her destined port! Here again you have an image of the operation of the HOLY GH^oST; without Him there would be no advance in holiness, our souls would be becalmed, there would be no progress onwards, and we should never behold the Haven where we would be.

You see by this, how impossible it is for a soul to exist, or to make the slightest advance in the spiritual life, without the abiding Presence of God the HOLY GH^oST.

In our Blessed LORD the Holy Spirit dwelt *without* measure, "and of His fulness have we all received, and grace for grace." To each baptized Christian, grace is given *according* to his measure, to "profit withal"—*as* he uses or misuses it—it is either increased or diminished;

“for to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have.” There is no limit to God’s grace—it is Almighty, and if we use it aright, and correspond to it, we can do all things in its strength and power.

In Baptism each one of us becomes the Temple of the HOLY GHOST. He takes up His dwelling with us, and nothing but wilful sin can cause Him to depart.

Return, O holy Dove! return,
Sweet messenger of rest;
I hate the sins which made Thee mourn,
And drove Thee from my breast.

“Grieve not then the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

Now what does being “sealed” mean? When two parties make a solemn compact together, they ratify or confirm it, by going through a form of signing and sealing in the presence of witnesses. In like manner when we were baptized, and set apart for the service of God, we were sealed with His signet, the sign of the holy cross; in token that hence-

forth we would be CHRIST'S soldiers and servants, and fight under His Banner against those three great enemies of the soul—Sin, the World, and the Devil—unto our life's end. Our godparents were our "sureties," or witnesses, undertaking for us that when we came of age we should, in our own person, ratify and *confirm* their act.

GOD, on His Part, set us free from "original sin," gave us His Holy Spirit, and "grafted us into the Body of CHRIST'S Church, making us lively (or living) members of the same." Living things must be nourished in order to sustain their vigour and vitality; as they grow and expand, more and more nutriment is needed for their sustenance; so with us, if we would "grow in grace," our souls need fresh and fresh supplies of GOD'S life-giving Spirit.

Now in CONFIRMATION, we receive more abundantly That which in Baptism GOD bestowed upon us in a measure, as an earnest of more grace to come; whilst on our side we renew those solemn promises which were then made in our name, *confirming* the same by our own act and deed. "When thou vowest a vow unto the LORD, defer not to pay it; better is

it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."

Confirmation is one of those "Sacramental Ordinances," to which I have already alluded. It was instituted by the Apostles, inspired by God. I have already told you they were the first bishops of the Christian Church. You will find the practice of it recorded, Acts viii. 14—17, and in other parts of Holy Scripture. None but a Bishop can confirm; for you will observe in the same chapter, v. 14, that the Apostles sent two of their number to Samaria, to confirm the newly baptized converts by the laying on of hands. For in those days, when Christianity was first preached, people were often baptized when grown up; their parents not having been Christians, and they themselves not brought till then to a knowledge of the Truth as it is in JESUS.

I have called Confirmation "Sacramental," because it is "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us." The "outward sign" being the laying on of the Bishop's hands with prayer; the "inward grace," the gift of God's Holy Spirit. What does not this grace comprise? God the HOLY GHOST comes in His boundless love, bringing

with Him to the soul He visits many excellent gifts. The larger the vessel we prepare, the more abundantly will it be filled. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit;" "covet earnestly the best gifts." He will stamp the baptismal Seal more deeply upon our souls; burning it in by the Fire of His Love.

The Seven special Gifts of the HOLY GHOST are these; Wisdom—Understanding—Counsel—Ghostly Strength—Knowledge—True Godliness—Holy Fear. They may be thus explained:

1. WISDOM teaches us to "count all things but loss, so we may win CHRIST;" and to choose GOD and love Him before all the world.

2. UNDERSTANDING helps us to believe, and in a measure to comprehend the truths of our holy religion.

3. COUNSEL enables us to see Satan's snares, and to avoid them; and in the midst of doubts and perplexities, to seek and to choose the "Kingdom of GOD and His Righteousness."

4. GHOSTLY STRENGTH gives us power to be faithful unto death and to overcome sin by the grace of GOD.

5. KNOWLEDGE shows us what GOD's will is, and how to do it.

6. TRUE GODLINESS makes us find a pleasure in GOD'S service, and a delight in that which is good.

7. HOLY FEAR causes us to dread above all things to offend GOD, whilst at the same time, it makes us love as well as reverence Him.

Come, HOLY GHOST, our souls inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire ;
Thou the anointing Spirit art,
Who dost Thy *seven-fold* gifts impart.

Thy blessed unction from above,
Is comfort, life, and fire of love :
Enable with perpetual light
The dulness of our blinded sight.

Anoint, and cheer our soiled face,
With the abundance of Thy grace :
Keep far our foes, give peace at home ;
Where Thou art guide no ill can come.

These precious gifts of the HOLY GHOST will be bestowed on you in Confirmation in proportion as you diligently prepare your soul to receive your Divine Visitor. There are many young persons alas ! who spend more time in adorning their persons and preparing their dress for this solemn occasion, than in making ready their souls, and thus run a fearful risk of receiving " the grace of God in vain." If they

knew the Gift of God and its value, they would not thus neglect the things belonging to their peace. Let us then speak a few words of the preparation required *before* Confirmation, and the fitting behaviour *afterwards*.

According to the greatness of the gift bestowed, so should our preparation be, "giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure." The example of the Apostles, and of those other holy persons who watched with them for the coming of the HOLY GHOST, should teach us that the chief part of the preparation must consist in prayer—fervent, earnest supplication for grace. There is a special promise that God will give His HOLY SPIRIT to "them that *ask* Him." "They that wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount with wings like eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint." Isa. xl. 31.

In Confirmation we receive fresh strength and power, to fight against our spiritual enemies. In preparing for this Ordinance, you should review your past failures, and deplore them before God, resolving by His help to be more faithful for the time to come.

It may be useful here to consider briefly

what those promises of our Baptism are, which we renew in Confirmation in so solemn a manner. They are THREE. The *first* is, that we "should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." To "renounce" anything is to give it up entirely, and to have nothing to do with it. Let us see what these things are which we have engaged to renounce.

1. "The Devil" is the great adversary of souls. His "works" consist in all manner of sin and evil, especially lying, tempting others to sin and rebellion against God.

2. "The World" is the enemy of God. It tries to make men forget Him, and think little of their heavenly inheritance. "Whosoever will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." "If any man love the world, the love of the FATHER is not in him." Its "pomps and vanities" are manifold. They are such as these: decking out our persons for admiration, foolish amusements, vain talking and jesting which are not convenient, light company, ambition, wishing to be great, loving the praise of men more than the praise of God.

3. The "Lusts of the flesh" are bad passions

and unruly desires for our bodies, to the hurt of our souls; craving for wrong things which are not expedient for us to have; using the good things of this world to excess; any impurity of thought, word, or deed.

The *second* promise of our Baptism is to "believe all the articles of the Christian Faith:" these being the truths which God has revealed to us in His Church, and which are to be found in her Creeds. "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

The *third* promise is to "keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of our life." "If ye love Me, keep My commandments," says our Blessed LORD. "If a man love Me, he will keep My words; and My FATHER will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him." "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."


These Promises, as I have already said, are in Confirmation *renewed*. In the most solemn manner, and in the presence of Almighty God, you will then have to confirm your baptismal vow. Before you pronounce those words, "I do," remember to Whom they are addressed, and be not as one that mocketh God. Beware

how you utter them carelessly, for they will be noted in God's book of account ; one day to appear for or against you, according as your future life is, or is not an acting out of your Christian profession.

“ Our help is in the Name of the LORD.” Let your resolution, therefore, be, “ God helping me, I will be faithful unto death.” “ Thou art my portion, O LORD : I have promised to keep Thy law.” “ Order my steps in Thy word : and so shall no wickedness have dominion over me.” “ I have sworn, and am steadfastly purposed : to keep Thy righteous judgments.”

Let your behaviour during the service be serious and reverent. Strive to collect your thoughts, and to fix them on what you are about. “ Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.” “ God is a Spirit : and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”

When the Bishop lays his hand upon your head, and prays for a daily increase of God's HOLY SPIRIT in you, make the petition your own, by devoutly saying “ Amen.” “ May it be unto me, O LORD, according to Thy word.”



“Leave me not, neither forsake me, O LORD God of my salvation.”

Listen with attention to the “Charge” of the Bishop. Lay his advice to heart, and try to remember and profit by it. Let not the example of thoughtless companions induce you to make your confirmation day a mere idle holiday. Rather let it be spent in prayer, and communing with God, trying to realize the greatness of the Gift you have received, and beseeching Him to teach you how to cherish It, and to enable you to bring forth fruits unto life eternal.

And now, one word of what your *after*-life should be. S. Paul tells us, if we live in the Spirit, we must also walk according to the Spirit. Gal. v. 25. And he instructs us how this should be done, and what those “fruits of the Spirit” are, which we must strive to show forth in our lives, to the glory of God, and the edification of our neighbour.

They are these: Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, and Temperance.

1. LOVE. “God is love.” “He that loveth not, knoweth not God:” for “love is of God.” We must love Him *first* and *above all*, and our neighbours and even our enemies for His sake.

2. **JOY** gives an interior happiness, which no outward things or worldly cares can disturb.

3. **PEACE** is a certain rest and tranquillity of conscience which passeth all understanding, and is bestowed by God upon such as do His will.

4. **LONGSUFFERING** enables us to bear all contrary things with patient resignation, both the trials and sorrows of this life and the injuries of men.

5. **GENTLENESS** helps us to deal tenderly with the infirmities of others, and to take contradictions and provocations without murmuring.

6. **GOODNESS** teaches us to do good unto all men, and to please God in everything.

7. **FAITH** helps us to believe the promises of God, and makes us faithful in our duties for His love's sake.

8. **MEEKNESS** renders us tractable, patient, "bearing all things," "enduring all things" for the love of God.

9. **TEMPERANCE** restrains our passions, and keeps our desires and affections in check, so that we may walk worthy of our Christian profession in all purity and sobriety.

These are the Fruits which you should pray God to bring forth in your heart, that His

race may not have been given you in vain.
Then shall "your light so shine before men,
that they may see your good works, and glorify
our FATHER which is in heaven."

Thou, Who camest from above,
Bringing light and shedding love ;
Teaching of Thy perfect way,
Giving gifts to men to-day :

Thou, Who once didst change our state,
Making us regenerate ;
Help us evermore to be
Faithful subjects unto Thee.

Where Thou art not, none can do
What is holy, just, and true ;
Those whose hearts Thy wisdom leads,
Think good thoughts, and do good deeds.

We have often grieved Thee sore,
Never let us grieve Thee more ;
Thou the feeble canst protect,
Thou the wandering canst direct.

We are dark—be Thou our light ;
We are blind—be Thou our sight ;
Be our comfort in distress ;
Guide us through the wilderness.

To the Blessed Three in One,
To the FATHER and the SON,
And the HOLY GHOST, arise
Praise from all below the skies.¹

¹ Neale.

“When Thou lettest Thy breath go forth
they shall be made, and Thou shalt renew the
face of the earth.”

Come, Thou HOLY SPIRIT, come ;
And from Thine eternal home,
Shed the ray of light divine.
Come, Thou Father of the poor ;
Come, Thou Source of all our store,
And within our bosoms shine.

Thou, of comforters the best !
Thou, the soul's most welcome guest ;
Sweet refreshment here below !
In our labour, rest most sweet,
Grateful shadow from the heat,
Solace in the midst of woe !

O most Blessèd Light Divine,
Shine within these hearts of Thine,
And our inmost being fill.
If Thou take Thy grace away,
Nothing pure in man will stay ;
All our good is turned to ill.

Heal our wounds ; our strength renew ;
On our dryness pour Thy dew ;
Wash the stains of guilt away.
Bind the stubborn heart and will,
Melt the frozen, warm the chill,
Guide the steps that go astray.

On the faithful, who adore
And confess Thee, evermore
In Thy sevenfold gifts descend ;

Give them virtue's sure reward ;
 Give them Thy salvation, LORD ;
 Give them joys that never end. Amen.¹

PRAYERS BEFORE CONFIRMATION.

Come, HOLY GHOST, replenish my heart
 with Thy grace, and kindle in me the fire of
 Thy love !

Descend, O Blessed SPIRIT of God, into my
 soul, and make it Thy dwelling-place !

O my God, grant me to be faithful unto
 Thy commandments, that so I may find my name written in
 the book of life !

O Almighty God, Who didst wash me from
 my birth sin, and didst make me Thine own
 child in Baptism ; behold, I have strayed away
 from the path of Thy commandments, and
 followed my own evil and perverse will. I
 have wasted Thy gifts and despised Thy grace.
 Make me back into favour, I beseech Thee, and

Thy HOLY SPIRIT rest once more upon me.
 Prepare me for this great Gift in Confirma-
 tion, and let not Thy grace be in vain for me.
 From henceforth I desire to serve Thee in
 witness of life. Give me, I pray Thee, the
 fulness of the blessing ; and when the Bishop
 shall lay his hands on my head, confirm his

¹ Hymns and Introits. Novello, 128.

act, I beseech Thee, O my Heavenly FATHER, and send down the HOLY SPIRIT into my soul, that He may abide with me for ever.

O my God, I give myself up body and soul to Thy service. Give me grace to fight against my three great enemies, the Devil, the World, and the Flesh. Strengthen me and sanctify me with the seven holy gifts of the SPIRIT, and make me to bring forth all the good fruits of a holy, religious, and devoted life; that so at last I may come to those heavenly joys which Thou hast prepared for such as love Thee and do Thy will, and that, through the merits and intercession of JESUS CHRIST, my LORD and SAVIOUR. Amen.

PRAYERS AFTER CONFIRMATION.

Almighty God, Who didst vouchsafe to regenerate me Thy servant by water and the HOLY GHOST, and give me the forgiveness of my sins; Strengthen me now, I pray Thee, by Thy HOLY SPIRIT, and daily increase in me Thy manifold gifts of grace; the Spirit of wisdom and understanding; the Spirit of counsel and ghostly strength; the Spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill me with the Spirit of Thy holy fear, now and evermore.

O LORD, I adore and bless Thee for what Thou hast done for me. I would fain join with Thy Angels and Saints, and Thy whole Church, in praising Thee for Thy goodness; and especially for the mercy Thou hast now shown me, in sending down Thy HOLY SPIRIT into the poor abode of my soul. O may He take full possession of me, and guide me into all holiness and truth.

And now, dear LORD, since Thou hast been pleased to consecrate my soul and body to Thy service, make me Thy temple, and purify me for Thyself. Give me grace to fulfil every duty that I may be called to; arm me for the warfare which lies before me; and grant me to persevere to the end, till I am made perfect in Thy will. Amen.

O HOLY SPIRIT, LORD, and Giver of life, Sanctifier of souls, Strength of the weak, and Comforter of the distressed; abide with me, I pray Thee, whom Thou hast anointed and sealed, to my life's end. I cannot continue faithful without Thy help. My best resolutions will be vain without Thine aid. O strengthen my weakness—preserve me in temptation—uphold me lest I fall—cleanse the thoughts of my heart by Thy holy inspiration—and grant

that I may never grieve Thee, nor drive Thee from me by wilful sin. And may this holy anointing and sealing which I have now received, be to me the earnest and pledge of an eternal inheritance in Heaven, through **JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.** Amen.

END OF PART IV.

THE GREAT TRUTHS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

PART V. THE HOLY COMMUNION.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST, SHOWN FORTH IN
THE INSTITUTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT OF
HIS BODY AND BLOOD.

DEAR Friends, in the foregoing parts of this book, we have considered together many great and solemn truths of our holy religion. I have told you of many precious gifts bequeathed to us by our Blessed LORD, and of many pledges of His Love, which He has entrusted to the keeping of the Catholic Church for our benefit. But I have now to speak to you of the greatest of all His gifts, the dearest of all the pledges

of His loving remembrance, the most precious of all the treasures of the Church. So great,—so inestimable in value is It, that I know not how to find fitting words to tell you about It.

You have doubtless often wondered at the merciful condescension of the SON of GOD in clothing Himself with our flesh, and veiling His Divinity under the form of our poor, weak humanity. You read in the Bible how He suffered and died to set us “at one” with our Maker—how He “ever liveth to make intercession for us” in Heaven—how He puts away the sins of those who truly repent, and sanctifies us with the HOLY GHOST. Your heart must surely have often burned within you, as you thought over all these mercies, and marvelled at the deep, unwearied love for sinners which dwells in the adorable Heart of JESUS CHRIST.

But methinks, the greatest wonder of all is this,—that after what He *had* done for men, and what He had *promised* to do for them, His loving Heart should yet have not been content—that all this should not have sufficed Him, and He must thirst to give them a still more touching expression of His affection.

Oh, how tender are the inventions of love!

How endearing the contrivances (if I may so express it) of **God Almighty** to gain men's hearts! How graciously He strives to win our affections, and to show us that, although we be weak, sinful, wayward creatures, our Heavenly **FATHER** loves us dearly, and has us ever in the book of His Remembrance! "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My Hands: thy walls are continually before Me." Isa. xlix. 16.

God tells us in the Holy Scriptures, that His "delight is to be with the sons of men;"—and to prove this, His Love has found a means of abiding with them for ever,—and that by a closer and more intimate union than it could have entered into the thoughts of man to conceive. **God in CHRIST** gives us His Flesh to eat, and His Blood to drink! He becomes our very Food—the nutriment and sustenance of our souls—our daily spiritual Bread. To the intent that we, thus nourished with Heavenly meat, may grow up in His Image and reflect His Likeness, till we come to behold Him in glory. "They will go from strength to strength: and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Sion." Ps. lxxxiv. 7.

Our Blessed LORD has our eternal interests always at heart ; and in His loving thoughtfulness He has made provision for all our wants. He knew that we could not live without Him—that He alone could satisfy “the empty soul ; and fill the hungry soul with goodness.”—He knew also that our souls, as well as our bodies, would require nourishment in order to gain strength—and so, when He was about to leave this world and go to His FATHER—He determined that His last legacy to mankind should meet *both* these needs, and be to us a perpetual memorial of His Love. “Having loved His own, which were in the world, He loved them to the end.”

Now this most blessed legacy which CHRIST has left us in His holy Church, is HIMSELF. His own Divine Presence as God and Man.

When our Blessed LORD was consoling His Disciples on that last sad evening of His Earthly Life, and they were weeping, and their hearts were troubled at the thought of His departure and of their loneliness, He said unto them, “I will not leave you comfortless ; I *will come to you.*” He says the same to us ; and most faithfully does He keep His word, for though He is now in Heaven, sitting at the

Right Hand of God, yet does He not forget that promise. Even to this day He finds a means of coming to visit His loved ones on earth, and dwelling with them ; and of being ever present on the altars of His Church.

How can this thing be ? you ask—and I can only answer you in the words of Holy Scripture, “with GOD nothing is impossible.” Nothing is too hard for GOD to accomplish, for He is Almighty ; He can be in a thousand places at once. “This is the LORD’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.” We must not seek to *understand*, what is above all human comprehension ; we must *believe* and *adore*.

GOD has revealed to us this wonderful mystery of His sacramental Presence, and has bidden us believe it ; and the Catholic Church has cherished this belief most jealously from the beginning, and handed it down to us. Let us cherish it also, with the same loving devotion, as befits so precious an inheritance of our Holy Faith.

I have said that our LORD, on the eve of His departure from this earth, was desirous of giving mankind a last pledge of His loving Remembrance. Herein you see how entirely, as man,

He shared our affections, and sympathized in our natural feelings.

If one of us be about to die, or to travel into a far distant land, does he not straightway bethink himself of those who are most dear to him? and cast about in his mind what he shall give them by way of keepsake,—as a last token of his love? Will he not, in order the better to express the tenderness of his affection, choose the most precious thing he possesses to give to the friend of his heart? And will he not take comfort in thinking that his friend will cherish that gift very dearly for his sake?

Even so did **JESUS CHRIST** act towards us, and chose for His last gift, the most precious of all treasures—the dearest proof, and memorial of His Love. Leaving us in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar (which we are now about to consider) a means, whereby He might be continually present with us, and abide in our souls by a marvellous nearness, even unto the end of the world.

How amazing is the thought, that He, Who “maketh the cloud His chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind,” should yet condescend to dwell in the souls of men! That mankind should not only be permitted to be

come "bone of His Bone and flesh of His Flesh," but one soul and one spirit with God the SAVIOUR!

Now This is one of the two Great Sacraments of the Church, which the catechism tells us are "generally necessary to salvation"—necessary, that is, for all who can obtain them—It is called the "HOLY COMMUNION," or the "Supper of the LORD." It is the greatest event in a person's whole life when he is admitted to this sacred and mysterious communion with JESUS CHRIST.

Being a Sacrament, It consists of two parts; one which is "outward and visible," the other which is "inward and spiritual." The "outward part or sign" in Holy Communion—that which we can see with our bodily eyes—is "Bread and wine which the LORD hath commanded to be received." The "inward part," seen only by the eye of the soul, is "the Body and Blood of CHRIST, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the LORD'S Supper."

This Sacrament was instituted by CHRIST Himself on the eve of His Passion; on that memorable night which preceded the day of His Crucifixion, when He partook of His last

supper with the twelve Apostles, and delivered to them His parting commands and instructions for the benefit of the Catholic Church throughout all ages.

It was the feast of the "Passover." The Jews kept this Feast still, in memory of their deliverance out of the land of Egypt, the place of their bondage, in the days of Moses, some 1500 years before.

God had greatly plagued the Egyptians in those days, because they refused to release His people from their slavery. On the night before they were set free, He had destroyed "all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast;" but the children of Israel were saved, for they were directed by God to sprinkle their door-posts with the blood of a lamb which they had offered that day in sacrifice by His command. And when the "destroying angel" saw the blood at their doors, he "passed over" their houses and hurt them not; but there was not a habitation of the Egyptians in which there was not one dead. *Exod. xii.*

So the Jews kept the Feast of the Passover "throughout their generations, by an ordinance for ever," and ate the Paschal or Passover

Lamb on the appointed night, as God had commanded them.

You will at once perceive that this was a type or picture of our Blessed LORD's Sacrifice upon the Cross—a shadow of the salvation that was to come. “For He is the very Paschal Lamb which was offered for us, and hath taken away the sin of the world;” and His sacred Blood has rescued us from everlasting death.

The Feast of the Passover has given place to the Christian Feast of CHRIST's Body and Blood; wherein we eat the Flesh of the Lamb of God, and are sprinkled with His most precious Blood; and thus the wrath of God passes over us, as it did over the children of Israel, whose doors were sprinkled with the blood of the paschal lamb.

It is recorded in the Holy Scriptures, that our LORD greatly wished to keep this Feast for the last time with His disciples. “With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” He commanded two of the Apostles to prepare it, and to ask the *loan* of a “large upper room” for the purpose.

JESUS had no home in this world; He chose the state of poverty for His portion. Instead

of coming as a great Prince, and residing in a palace, as might have been expected of the SON of Almighty God, He willed to be poor and despised, having "not where to lay His head." "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."

Behold Him, meek and lowly, seeking the *loan* of a room, wherein He may sup with His Disciples! How often has He stood at the door of your heart and knocked, and begged for a place in your affections? Rev. iii. 20. How often has He desired with a great desire to come into your soul, and you have refused Him entrance? Perchance there has been no room for Him, or you have been too much occupied with the cares and pleasures of this life to give any heed to His request for admission. Had you but opened the door to Him *then*, He might, these many years past have been dwelling in you, and teaching you heavenly lessons of wisdom and love.

Now the two Disciples went and did as JESUS had commanded them, and they found the room and prepared the supper. And "when the hour was come, He sat down, and the twelve Apostles with Him."

S. John, in his Gospel, records a most

touching instance of our LORD's humility, which is full of instruction to us. JESUS "riseth from supper," says that Apostle, "poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the Disciples' feet." This was an Eastern custom, and was common in those warm climates, where people walk barefoot. It was generally performed by a servant, and the reason of our Blessed LORD doing it Himself, is apparent from what He says afterwards to the Apostles. "If I your LORD and Master have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you."

How truly was our dear LORD "among us as he that serveth;" and how earnestly we should strive to follow His blessed example in acts of tender charity to our neighbours for His sake; and that alike to friends and enemies, for be sure our LORD did not refuse to Judas any of these His ministrations of love.

This washing of the Disciples' feet took place almost immediately before the institution of the Blessed Sacrament of CHRIST's Body and Blood. Holy men of old teach us that it was intended to signify the *dispositions* with

which persons should come to the Holy Communion.

1. With hearts cleansed from all wilful sin.
2. In deep humility and self-abasement.
3. In perfect charity with all men.

Let us pause for a moment and contemplate our Divine Master in this His exceeding humility. Behold Him kneeling at the feet of Judas the traitor! he, who in spite of all CHRIST'S love and tender consideration, had sold Him to His enemies for thirty pieces of silver (the price of a slave), and who even now, "sought opportunity to betray Him unto them."

Is there no lesson to be learnt here? no lesson for us—for you, and for me—if we only read it aright? Has JESUS never knelt before us, and besought us, for the sake of His dear love, to refrain from some mortal sin? Has He never implored us to take heed to our ways, to amend our lives, and to be reconciled to GOD? Has He not even washed us clean from our sins, and we have defiled ourselves anew? Have none since Judas betrayed their LORD to the great Enemy of souls for the price of some paltry pleasure—some momentary sinful gratification—some covetous desire?

“I speak as unto wise men ; judge ye what I say.”

There is one especial feature of our LORD's teaching which I cannot forbear to notice. It is this. He never requires us to do anything that He has not Himself shown us the way to do. He is not content with saying, ‘Do what I command you ;’ but He first does it Himself, and then says, ‘Do as I have done.’ “Leaving us an example that we should follow His steps.”

For instance, He bids us wash one another's feet by acts of kindness and love ; but He first does it Himself. He tells us to take up our Cross, and follow Him ; but He Himself goes forth, bearing His Cross, and leads the way to Calvary. He says, “Love your enemies ;” “do good to them that hate you ;” and His own conduct to Judas is our pattern.

And now, supper is ended ; and though our Blessed LORD's soul is “sorrowful even unto death,” as the hour of His bitter Passion draws near, yet does He not forget us. In the midst of His sorrow He remembers us. How touching it is, that at such a moment as this, when He was well nigh crushed by the awful nearness of the dread hour, wherein He was to bear and expiate the sins of a whole world, He

should yet have cherished poor sinners in His adorable Heart, and occupied Himself, even in these His last moments, with their eternal interests! For this is the time He chooses to bestow on His Church the inestimable Gift of His everlasting Presence.

The Apostles are waiting in silent expectation; they feel that some unusual event is about to take place. And then our LORD rises, as we may presume; and this is the account which is given in the Gospels of that which followed. "JESUS took bread, and blessed and brake it, and gave it to the disciples;" saying, "TAKE, EAT, THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH IS GIVEN FOR YOU; DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME."

Likewise after supper "He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them;" saying, "DRINK YE ALL OF THIS; FOR THIS IS MY BLOOD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, WHICH IS SHED FOR YOU, AND FOR MANY, FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS."

This was the first Celebration of the HOLY COMMUNION. It is so called, because we are therein united to our LORD JESUS CHRIST. "We dwell in Him, and He in us."

Although we cannot see CHRIST with our

bodily eyes, as the twelve Apostles did on that memorable evening, in the upper chamber at Jerusalem; yet is He as *really* and *truly* present now, in the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood, as when first He instituted It.

Only Bishops and Priests of the Holy Catholic Church have the power of thus blessing the bread and wine, and calling down JESUS' Sacramental Presence from Heaven. The lower order of clergy, called "Deacons," cannot perform this act; neither can they absolve men from their sins. This wonderful privilege has been handed down from one generation of Priests to another, ever since the Christian Church was founded. First the Apostles gave the power to *their* successors, by the laying on of hands, and so it has been transmitted from one to another until the present day.

When a Priest of our Church is ordained for his holy office by the Bishop, he receives, through the laying on of hands, power of the HOLY GHOST to forgive sins in CHRIST'S Name, and so to bless the bread and wine in the Holy Communion, that they become the very Presence of JESUS CHRIST.

At the Priest's word and prayer, CHRIST descends from Heaven, after a hidden and

spiritual manner, and gives Himself to us under the forms of bread and wine. After the "Prayer of Consecration," as it is called, these no longer remain the *same* as before, and may no longer be regarded as common food; for they become possessed of a hidden virtue, without losing their own proper substances, and in the Bread and Wine does the LORD of Glory come to visit the children of men.

This was what our Blessed LORD spoke of in the sixth chapter of S. John's Gospel, and called "the Bread of Life," Which "cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world." Herein are David's words fulfilled:—"Man shall eat angels' food;" and This is indeed that true "Bread which strengtheneth man's heart," of which the manna in the wilderness was a type or picture.

"The bread which I will give is My flesh," said our LORD (when speaking beforehand of the great Gift He would bestow on His Church, ere He returned to the Bosom of the FATHER): and S. Paul says of the holy Sacrament of the Altar, "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of CHRIST?" "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of CHRIST?"

This is a great mystery, far beyond the comprehension of man. How we can eat bread, and at the same time our LORD'S Body; and drink wine, and at the same time His Blood; is, what we cannot explain. Enough that God has revealed it to us, and we are required to take it on faith. We see bread—we see wine—we taste them—we handle them—but He, Who cannot lie, assures us that under these outward forms is hid the SON of GOD, our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

We can only *see* the outward part of the Sacrament, but we must nevertheless *believe* the inward part, though it be veiled from our bodily eyes. Clad as JESUS CHRIST now is in glory and majesty, we could not gaze on Him and live; and so, in merciful consideration for our weakness, He hides both His Divinity and His now radiant Humanity under these earthly forms, that so He may visit us and bless us by His Presence. Let us not stagger at His words, nor attempt to reduce them to the measure of our human understanding, but rather receive them with child-like submission and humble faith.

There were those in the days of our SAVIOUR'S earthly ministry, who were offended

with Him, because of His words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." S. John vi. 53. They said to one another, with disdain, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" And after JESUS had so spoken, many of His disciples "went back, and walked no more with Him;" and for their excuse said, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?"

Their example should warn us, and make us beware how we throw away our salvation, because we are unable to comprehend all the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. When once men begin to doubt, unless they go at once to JESUS, and beseech Him to give them grace, to "hold fast the faith without wavering," the Devil draws near, and suggests further difficulties, till they get so entangled with doubts and perplexities, that it is a hard matter for them to get free.

Imagine that JESUS CHRIST says to you as He did to the Apostles, "Will ye also go away?" and answer Him as they did, by the mouth of S. Peter, "LORD, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Doubt not, but steadfastly believe, that God's

ord is truth, and seek not to know more than
 e has revealed. "Blessed are they which
 ve not seen, and yet have believed."

Sing we that blest Body broken,
 Our weak souls' mysterious Food :
 And the words our King hath spoken,
 Gifting us with His own Blood ;
 His true Presence to betoken,
 And our holy brotherhood.

Born for us, and for us given,
 Of a virgin undefiled ;
 Scattering precious seed from heaven,
 Sojourned He in this world's wild ;
 On that much-remembered even,
 He His wondrous course fulfilled.

Meekly to the law complying,
 He had finished its commands ;
 And to them, at supper lying,
 Gave Himself with His own hands ;
 A memorial of His dying,
 Thenceforth unto all the lands.

God the Word, by one word maketh
 Bread His very flesh to be ;
 And whoso that cup partaketh,
 Tastes the fount of Calvary ;
 While the carnal mind forsaketh,
 Faith receives the mystery.

Unto that His Presence veiled,
 Draw we nigh with heads bowed low ;

All that ancient rites entailed,
 Yield to higher blessings now ;
 Earthly touch and sight have failed—
 Faith adores, nor questions how.

CHAPTER II.

THE UNBLOODY SACRIFICE.

“MARVELLOUS are Thy Works, and that my soul knoweth right well !” So spake King David, and we may well use his words, and enter into his feelings, as we contemplate the wonderful works of God. Even those in the natural world must often fill our minds with admiration and amazement ; how much more those in the spiritual world !

We have beheld, with the eye of faith, God Almighty clothed with our flesh ; His glorious Divinity veiled under our frail humanity. Gaze we now upon a still more wondrous abasement—His love stoops still lower to meet our littleness, for He hides both Divinity and Humanity under the poor forms of bread and wine !

Even in this our place of exile, JESUS finds

a means of visiting and refreshing us. For lo ! He descends from His Throne in Heaven and enters into the very souls of men, and will abide with those who love Him, for ever and ever. "Verily Thou art a GOD that hidest Thyself, O GOD of Israel the SAVIOUR!" Isa. xlv. 15. And Thy love "passeth knowledge!" It is far beyond all human conception—the mind of man cannot take it in! How well may we Christians exclaim, with greater reason than ever Moses did, when speaking of God's chosen people, the Church of the Old Testament; "what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all we call upon Him for?" Deut. iv. 7.

Methinks it were a marvellous condescension, were God Almighty to visit our Churches and our Altars, and give us such tokens of His Presence, as He did to those of old in the Temple. But that in these latter days, He should so prostrate Himself as to come and take up His abode in the souls of men, is indeed a marvel of marvels—a miracle of condescension and love!

When blessed Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth, before the Birth of JESUS CHRIST,

in the Flesh, that aged Saint was so penetrated with the honour, that she exclaimed, "Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my LORD should come to me?" But herein is a far greater cause for wonder that, not the Mother of GOD, but GOD Almighty Himself, the King of angels, the LORD of Heaven and Earth, should come to visit us, and to dwell in us! O my GOD, "what is man that Thou art so mindful of him; and the son of man that Thou thus regardest him? Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels to crown him with glory and worship!"

Blessed Saint Chrysostom, the holy author of that prayer in our Common Prayer Book, which goes by his name, was wont to exclaim, "What shepherd before JESUS CHRIST ever fed his flock with his own flesh!" He is indeed the Good Shepherd, who "giveth His Life for the sheep," and not content with that, nourishes His flock evermore with His Body and Blood!

But JESUS CHRIST does not only feed and sustain our souls in this Heavenly Feast; "He ever liveth to make intercession for us" in Heaven. He is *always* offering up His Great Atonement for us; and pleading His sacred Passion, and His Five most glorious Wounds

before Almighty God in our behalf. He is our Great High Priest, and in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, not only is He that HOLY ONE to whom the Offering is made;—for He is very GOD of very GOD—but, O mystery of mysteries! He is, at one and the same time, the Priest who offers, and the Offering itself!

He is that great and acceptable Sacrifice, Which is evermore rising up with a sweet savour before the Throne of God. His Blood truly speaketh better things than that of Abel, and crieth unto God for mercy and not for vengeance.

Now, it is very true, that all the old carnal or fleshly sacrifices of the Law are passed away, and have given place to spiritual sacrifices, and a spiritual worship. They were but a shadow of the reality—“when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” 1 Cor. xiii. 10. JESUS CHRIST has opened to us a “new and living way” of approaching God, “which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His Flesh.” Heb. x. 20. CHRIST died once for all upon the Cross; and having offered that “one Sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the Right Hand of God.”

But, let us not fall into the mistake which some do ; and look upon **JESUS** as a *dead*, and not a *living* **CHRIST**. The **GOD-Man** “ever liveth.” He has taken His Human Body with Him into Heaven. Those sacred Wounds still exist, though they are now radiant with glory. He is always pleading His adorable sacrifice before the Throne of Grace for the sins of mankind. In one sense the **Great Atonement** is continually going on ; for **JESUS CHRIST**, our Advocate and Mediator, is applying it evermore to our souls in the blessed Sacraments.

Each time we celebrate the Holy Communion, and offer the Eucharistical Sacrifice—or Sacrifice of Thanksgiving and Praise—on earth, we do as S. Paul hath it, “Show forth the **LORD’S** Death till He come.” We plead His Merits and Atonement before Almighty God, in behalf of our sin-stained souls ; and beseech Him for the sake of His dear **SON** to supply our needs, and those of the whole Catholic Church. **JESUS CHRIST** could die but once—He has died, and is risen—He is “become the First-fruits of them that slept.” Henceforth, “death hath no more dominion over Him ;” He “ever liveth” to plead our

cause, and to shower down upon us the precious gifts He gained for us on Calvary. The Cross and Passion cannot be repeated, but the *unbloody* Sacrifice remaineth; and when we offer up JESUS CHRIST after this *spiritual* fashion in the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood, we plead His Sacrifice and claim all the promises of God, which that most adorable Sacrifice has obtained for us.

We represent before Almighty GOD, the Sacred Passion and Death of our SAVIOUR; and for His sake, we hope for mercy and favour at GOD'S Hands. We say to Him, as it were by our very actions, "Behold in Thy SON, O GOD, what may move Thee to compassionate Thy servants! This is His Sacred Blood—this is His most Holy Body—behold the prints of the nails—the Wound in His Side—the Crown of Thorns—the exceeding Agony! Whilst His precious Wounds lie open before Thee, may our sins, O GOD, be covered! May the Blood of our dear LORD wash all our stains away!"

S. Paul bids us take heed to *discern* the LORD'S Presence in the Holy Communion. It is not enough to look upon It as a bare remembrance of His Cross and Passion,—a

memorial of His Death; as the manner of some is. Or to regard It only as something intended to recall Him to our minds, and lead our thoughts to dwell on His Love and Benefits. We must do more than this;—we must believe that He is actually present, hidden under these earthly veils; and that although we see Him not with our bodily eyes, He is none the less *really* there.

In order to do this, we must pray for Faith; without Faith we should eat and drink unworthily of this Sacred Banquet, “not discerning the LORD’S Body.” This Faith is a gift of GOD. The HOLY GHOST alone can enable us to “discern” JESUS CHRIST in this Sacrament, He only can give us grace to believe the great and mysterious truth, that in every crumb of the consecrated Bread, and every drop of the wine, we receive CHRIST wholly; to dwell in us, and we in Him, if we be faithful.

Wine out-pour’d and Bread is broken,
 Yet in either wondrous Token,
 CHRIST entire hath sworn to be!

This is the true “sacrifice of righteousness,” which Holy Scripture directs us to offer, when we call upon the Name of the LORD. For

JESUS CHRIST is our **RIGHTEOUSNESS**; and it is His **Blood** and **Merits** that we offer to **Almighty God** in this 'Holy Sacrament. **CHRIST** is present there, "verily and indeed." He invites all men to hasten to that heavenly feast which He has prepared. He hath "made a great supper," and many are bidden to it. He sends forth His **Messengers** to summon the guests, saying, "Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God!" Rev. xix.

Wisdom "hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table." Behold, she crieth to the sons of men in the Name of the **LORD**, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." Beware how you neglect this gracious invitation; pray to the **HOLY GHOST** to enlighten your mind, and enable you to discern **JESUS CHRIST** "in the breaking of bread."

The poor robber on the Cross was converted, whilst gazing on that adorable Sacrifice, which **CHRIST** there offered for the sins of mankind. Can our hearts and affections remain hard and cold, when we contemplate Him ever renewing this Sacrifice, after a spiritual manner, on the altars of our churches, and pleading His Sacred Passion from the very habitations of our souls?

S. Chrysostom (of whom I have already spoken) says that there is no time when our prayers are so acceptable to God, and so certain of a gracious reception at His hands, as when they are offered, steeped as it were in the Blood of His dear SON. And He assures us that could our eyes be opened to behold the things of the unseen world, we should see thousands of angels adoring at the Holy Communion, and marvelling at the merciful condescension of God in stooping thus low, to abide with the children of men.

“Thanks be to God for His unspeakable GIFT.”

The LORD, Who for us liv'd and died,
Doth yet upon this earth abide ;
His Wounds He pleads, all bright and beaming,
God's love for sinners aye revealing ;
And offers still His Incarnation,
To win them pardon and salvation.

That ever-interceding Blood
Of Him Who died upon the Rood,
From thousand altars, day by day,
With silent voice doth wend its way
To the great FATHER'S Throne above,
Not vengeance asking—only love.

What can the FATHER CHRIST deny,
Whose wounds before Him open lie ;

That bitter agony and woe,
 Those wondrous sufferings to show,
 Which all were borne in sinners' place,
 That they might find redeeming grace.

O could our eyes but open'd be,
 Around each altar we should see
 A thousand angels bow'd in prayer,
 Adoring His blest Presence there,
 And crying, "Glory, LORD, to Thee,
 For this Thy great humility."

J.

CHAPTER III.

THE HEAVENLY BANQUET AND THE UNWILLING GUESTS.

CAN it be possible that JESUS CHRIST invites, nay beseeches men to come to Him in the blessed Sacrament of His love, and they will not? Offers to bless them with His Divine Presence here, and to give them eternal life hereafter, and they turn away?

It is possible—it is only too true. CHRIST died for all, yet are there some who seem quite insensible to His love; and upon whose ear His words of gracious invitation fall unheeded. God calls and man responds not. Hear the

touching complaint of the Almighty, by the mouth of His prophet. "All day long have I stretched forth My hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people."

It must surely be a subject of deep sorrow to earnest persons to see the dying command of our Blessed LORD thus slighted and neglected. God poureth out His benefits upon us day by day, and how scant is the measure of our return! We do not even give Him love for love.

The kingdom of heaven is opened to the children of men, but few there be who enter in, or care to dwell with JESUS. The LORD of Glory would abide with man, but man desires it not. "I will dwell in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people." That is the gracious offer. How is it received? "They all with one accord began to make excuse." God offers to man the most precious of gifts, and man is so blind to Its unspeakable value and his own eternal interests, as to reject It.

Imagine a poor beggar, starving and cold, clad in rags and covered with sores, crouching at the gate of a great king's palace. One might think he would be grateful to be fed

with the crumbs which fell from the table of the king's servants, when behold! the king himself comes and invites him in, *presses* him to be his guest, and tells him that he shall sup with him at his own table. Can you fancy the poor beggar refusing such an offer as this, and preferring his own state of misery and wretchedness? Would you not be surprised at his even hesitating to accept it?

And yet, there are many amongst ourselves, who, more destitute than this beggar, have had a far greater offer made to them, and have refused it.

JESUS is holding out His arms to embrace you; it would seem as if He could not be happy without your love. He says to you, with inconceivable tenderness, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He promises to dwell with you; to bless you with His Love; to give you a foretaste of the delights of Heaven, even now, in this "valley of the shadow of death." Can you resist such Love, or be deaf to such an appeal as this? Listen to His Voice of tender reproach; "O My people, what have I done to thee; and wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against Me."

I am now addressing those who have hitherto neglected to avail themselves of our LORD's most gracious offer ; who, from some cause, or other, either from false humility, or the dread of being forced to amend their lives, have disobeyed His last command, and never approached Him in the Sacrament of His Love.

O Christian souls, how long will ye bear CHRIST's name, and by your acts deny Him? How long will ye "love vanity and seek after leasing?" How long will ye hew out for yourselves broken cisterns, which can hold no water, and forsake the Fountain of Living water? Why will ye thus delay to come to Him, who alone can give you everlasting life and rest?

Our Blessed LORD bore you in His mind on the night of His sore agony. He has left you a means of being eternally united with Himself: Far from eagerly grasping it, you must needs be *urged* to accept It; *pressed* to avail yourself of It; warned that you are risking your salvation if you reject It! "Brethren, these things ought not so to be."

Surely if you really *knew* Who it is, that invites you and offers Himself to be your Food; there were no occasion to force your attendance at the Great Supper, which CHRIST has pre-

pared. On the contrary, you would hasten thither of your own accord, and beg Him to feed you with the "Bread of Life." We should not hear you say, '*must* we come?'—but, '*may* we come?'

"Whoso eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day: for My Flesh is meat indeed and My Blood is drink indeed." These are our LORD's own words. S. John vi. This heavenly Food alone can nourish the soul and give it strength to walk through the wilderness of this world unto the Mount of God. How can any one expect to see Heaven unless the Seed of Eternal Life have been sown in him in this world? We can have no life, except in JESUS CHRIST. We are dead, if we abide not in Him.

Is any willing to risk his salvation, because he cannot forego the sinful pleasures of this world? Because, by giving himself wholly to JESUS, he must use more strictness in his life, more discipline over his evil passions, more watchfulness against his faults and his self-will? God offers us the Food of Angels, shall we prefer the husks of swine—the vanities of this present life? LORD, evermore give us the Bread which nourisheth to life eternal!

Remember, that God will not "always strive with man." This is your day of grace, when salvation is possible; another day may come, when God may say of you, "If thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes!"

JESUS is asking of thousands in this cold, hard world, a lodging in their hearts. Christian soul, He is even now knocking at thy door, refuse Him not entrance, for He will abundantly bless the place, where He abideth. The Prophet blessed the house of the Shunammite woman, with whom he lodged; making all things to increase and prosper with her. 2 Kings iv. Shall not CHRIST do more for thee? For behold, a greater than Elisha is here! If thou wilt not open to Him now, a day may come when He will cease to knock and leave thee to thyself. There is no greater punishment than this, when God leaves a sinner to himself, and ceases to strive with him.

Make ready for the LORD a lodging in thy soul; an "upper room furnished and prepared," a place in thy heart's best affections. Give thyself wholly to CHRIST; He will come in and sup with thee, and if thou entertain Him well,

He will never depart. He will write thy name in the book of Life; He will own thee for His own in the Day of Judgment; He will bring thee to His everlasting rest and joy! Thou mayest now become the possessor of the "Pearl of great price;" be advised, cast all else aside—despise all else, and make it thine own.

And now, to speak a few words to those who really desire to lead a religious life, and are willing to make some sacrifice for the love of CHRIST. They have been taught by the Holy Spirit of God to desire to belong to JESUS, and to have Him dwell in their soul. But when they consider the *greatness* of the Guest, they begin to fear and to be disquieted. They cannot forget that though He is their SAVIOUR, He is also their Master; not only JESUS the SON of Mary, but GOD Almighty; and they feel quite unworthy to receive Him.

It is my Maker—dare I stay?
My SAVIOUR—can I turn away?

They remember their sins, and their careless lives; their want of earnestness in God's service; and they feel utterly unfit to come into God's Sacred Presence in this Holy Sacrament. But I would ask them this one question. How

then will you be fit to die? You *must* come into God's Presence *then*. Take refuge in His wounded Side now, and He will hide you Therein from the wrath to come.

Rock of Ages cleft for me,
 Let me hide myself in Thee ;
 Let the water and the Blood
 From Thy wounded Side which flow'd,
 Be of sin the double cure ;
 Save from wrath and make me pure.

But you say you fear to eat and drink your own condemnation in the LORD'S Supper. You shrink back from a nearer approach to JESUS, because you feel your own exceeding unworthiness. It is very true—you are not worthy. In one sense none are worthy. The greatest Saint that ever lived upon this earth, if he looked to himself alone, would be forced to confess himself unfit to come so near his GOD and SAVIOUR.

But GOD can make you worthy. He can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. Nay He will accept you *just as you are*, if you are really striving against sin and following after holiness—no matter how little progress you have made—only give Him your whole heart, and yield up to Him your hitherto rebellious

will. Has He not bidden you to this Feast of Love? Do you think He does not know what is good for you, a great deal better than you can possibly know yourself? Would He have ordained such a blessed means of grace, if He had not known that your soul could not exist without Him; that your salvation would be impossible without this Food of Life and Immortality?

Again, you urge that you are not prepared; that you must needs reform your whole life, if you would become a Communicant; and live in quite a different manner from what you have been accustomed to do. You are so far right. You must certainly alter your life, if it have been such as you think God would disapprove of. But then you would have to do that, to be saved at all. You may be quite sure of this; that he, who is leading a life that unfits him to receive JESUS CHRIST in the Holy Communion, can have little hope of Heaven.

If you are not sufficiently prepared, why not set at once about your preparation? Suppose you were to die to-night, all unprepared as you are, whither do you think your soul would go? Could you reasonably expect that God would

receive you into Paradise, when you had neglected the dying command of His dear SON? Could you urge your claim to be accepted in the Beloved, when you had no part with the Beloved? If you would share in the benefits of the Atonement, you must beware how you continue to neglect one of the greatest means of union with Almighty God, which that Atonement has procured for you.

But perhaps there is some *one* sin you are unwilling to give up. Some sinful practice, or impure amusement, that you love better than JESUS CHRIST. It may be a corrupt passion, or an inordinate affection, that has gained such mastery over your will, that you quite shrink from the struggle you must go through, before you can hope to root it out. What says Holy Scripture—"If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out." "If thy foot offend thee, cut it off." Beware lest one darling sin should cost you everlasting life.

It is very true that no preparation can be too careful, when it is a question of receiving the King of kings. But, on the other hand, you must not fall into a common mistake, and imagine you must be quite good and holy before you may venture to approach Him. This

were to begin at the wrong end. You should come to JESUS to be *made* good.

All the days of your life on earth, you will be liable to sin, "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." But in the Holy Communion, CHRIST our Righteousness, washes us in His own most precious Blood, and "cleanseth us from all unrighteousness." He will purify you and clothe you with His own merits, as with a wedding garment of exceeding whiteness and beauty. Only make up your mind to *try* and be good, and then, if you come to CHRIST, He will give you strength to carry out your intention.

If you wait to become strong and holy before you venture to take this blessed Food and medicine of the soul; it would be as if a sick man were to insist on getting well, before he could be induced to touch the food, or taste the medicine designed to nourish and to heal him.

• From the altar JESUS CHRIST is calling you. He calls each one of us to partake of the Banquet of His love. He will have all men to be saved. He calls alike, rich and poor, young and old, learned and unlearned. But most especially He calls the needy, the desolate, the

heavy laden, the sorrowful. It is a feast for "the poor, the halt, the maimed, the blind." In other words, for those souls which need healing, strengthening, comforting. For those who know their own necessities, and hasten to **JESUS**, casting all their cares at the foot of His Cross.

"Perfect love casteth out fear." **JESUS** is the true Physician—the great Consoler. "He healeth those that are broken in heart: and giveth medicine to heal their sickness." He will bind up your wounds, pouring in oil and wine. If you come to Him in faith, nothing doubting, He will make you whole of whatsoever spiritual disease you have.

JESUS, who suffered here below,
Feels sympathy with human woe,
And still remembers in the skies,
His Tears, His Prayers, His Agonies.

In every pang that rends the heart,
The Man of sorrows had a part;
Touched with the feeling of our grief,
He to the sufferer brings relief.

With boldness therefore at His Throne,
Let man make all his sorrows known
And ask the aid of heavenly power,
To help him in temptation's hour.

If a great king were to make a feast, and invite you to it, nay command your attendance, you might well doubt your fitness. You might think perhaps that a poor ignorant person, like yourself, unused to the ways of courts, would be out of place at a prince's table. But supposing the king assured you that he had taken all this into consideration before he asked you ; and that he was willing to have you *just as you were*—and that because he loved you. Would not this assurance set your mind at rest ?

Furthermore, if the king were to provide a beautiful white robe for you to wear, instead of your old and perhaps tattered clothes—(this is a common custom in the East, where the giver of a feast provides each guest, who is unable to furnish it himself, with a rich garment befitting the occasion)—would you not come without fear ? and conclude that you must be welcome, if the king took such pains to make you fit to come ?

Now, after this manner does JESUS CHRIST deal with our souls. He has made a great Feast, and He invites us all to it. He assures us of a welcome, and He offers to clothe us with His own Righteousness ; and present us

to our Heavenly FATHER, clad in His Merits, and sanctified through His Atonement. Thus introduced, and thus adorned, the HOLY ONE, "Who inhabiteth Eternity," no longer perceives our wretchedness and unworthiness, but sees in us His Beloved SON, in Whom He is well pleased. He accepts us, and loves us for His sake.

Let not then fear keep you back from the LORD's Table. If our Blessed LORD were to appear visibly upon earth, and were to call you to Him, and promise to forgive you all your sins, and love you always, if you would draw near to Him and love Him in return, would you be afraid to approach Him? But, supposing you stood afar off in fear and trembling, and He were to reassure you, as He did His Disciples; saying, "It is I—be not afraid;" would not those gracious words take away all your fears? Would you not hasten to cast yourself at His sacred Feet, and embrace them, saying, "LORD, what wilt Thou have me to do?" "Speak, LORD, for Thy servant heareth."

What you would do *then*, do *now*. CHRIST is ever calling to you from the Altars of His Church, and beseeching you to come to Him, *that* He may give you life. You cannot see

Him with your bodily eyes, but He is none the less *really* present. Though invisible, He is as certainly there, as when He stood on the sea shore in Galilee, or upon the mountains in Judea. Hasten to Him. Beg Him to feed you with the Bread of Heaven—ask Him to make you His very own. Depend upon it, He will not cast you out.

Be not deaf to His Voice. You know not if this may not be the very last time He will call you upon earth. The next time you hear that Voice, it may sound in wrath and not in love, saying no longer, “Come unto Me”—but “Depart from Me!”

Blessed are they who are invited to the Table of the great King; more blessed they who refuse not this gracious invitation; but blessed above all will those souls be, who, having been nourished here with CHRIST’S Body and Blood, shall be bidden to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in Heaven; when “the righteous shall shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their FATHER.”

Lost in sin, the SAVIOUR sought us,
Gave His Life for our’s to pay;
Lessons sweet His Lips have taught us,
He the Life, the Truth, the Way!

To His throne in Heaven returning,
 Veiled awhile from mortal eyes ;
 JESU'S love for sinners burning,
 Yet new mercies doth devise.

See His Flesh for us is given,
 Made our Bread for evermore,
 From the Side of JESUS riven,
 See for us the life Blood pour.

Hark ! His Voice our souls inviting,
 ' Are ye hungry ? come and eat !'
 Come, and in His Love delighting
 Ye shall feed on Angels' meat !

Are ye thirsty, worn, and weary,
 Sorely tried with sin and pain ?
 At this Fountain drink ye freely,
 Ye shall never thirst again.

Blessed LORD, O let us never
 Wander from *such* Love astray,
 But abide with us for ever,
 Be our Refuge and our Stay.

From the world's false joys alluring
 Save us in Thy wounded Side,
 There in patient love enduring,
 Sin and sorrow let us hide.

When the hour of death is nearing,
 Thoughts of evil round us throng,
 Mid the gloom our spirits cheering,
 LORD, abide, and we are strong.

Death can have no power to sever
The Communion of the blest,
To abide in Thee *for ever*,
This is Heaven! and this is rest!

T.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW WE MUST PREPARE FOR THE COMING OF THE GREAT KING.

You are, I trust, by this time convinced that you cannot live without JESUS; and that unless He dwell in your soul, you have no assurance of Eternal Salvation.

He is the "Prince of Peace"—and "maketh wars to cease in all the world." He alone can give you that peace which "passeth understanding," of which we read in the Holy Scripture. If you will only let Him set up His Throne in your soul, He will trample His enemies, even your sins, under His Feet, and give you a strength above that of human nature; whereby things will become possible to you, which were before impossible, and Satan will

be defeated and driven away. For then, in very truth, He that fighteth *for*, and *in* you, will be greater than he that striveth against you; and He will never rest till He has "got-ten Himself the victory."

The King of kings, the LORD of Angels, is coming to visit your soul;—how shall you prepare it for so great a Guest? Let us turn to the Church Catechism; and we shall see that we are bidden to examine ourselves on *three* points, before we approach CHRIST in the Holy Communion.

1. If we repent truly of our former sins, and are stedfastly purposed to lead a new life.

2. If we have a lively faith in God's mercy through CHRIST; and a thankful remembrance of His Death.

3. If we be in perfect charity with all men.

Repentance—Faith,—and Love—you see are the requisites for a worthy reception of the LORD's Supper.

This answers to S. Paul's injunction, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup." 1 Cor. xi. 28.

1. In order to Repentance and amendment of

life, there must be Self-examination, Confession, Prayer, and a "Godly sorrow" for past sin. We have already considered these at some length, in foregoing parts of this book—so I will treat of them very briefly here.

Although it is so necessary a thing, as regards your eternal welfare, that you should receive the Holy Communion—yet it would avail you nothing, nay, it would but increase your condemnation, if you were to approach It without the fitting dispositions; and without weighing and considering the "dignity of that Holy Mystery." "For as the benefit is great if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that Holy Sacrament (for then we spiritually eat the Flesh of CHRIST, and drink His Blood; we dwell in CHRIST and CHRIST in us; we are one with CHRIST and CHRIST with us); so is the danger great if we receive the same unworthily. For then we are guilty of the Body and Blood of CHRIST our SAVIOUR; we eat and drink our own damnation, not considering the LORD's Body."

Be not discouraged at this saying, for if you be only in earnest, striving against sin, and feel that you would rather die than offend God wilfully, you need not fear—you may "come

boldly to the Throne of Grace," and you "will obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." JESUS Himself has said, "they that be whole, need not a physician, but they that be sick." "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." At the same time it would be but mocking God to approach His Holy Table, without a firm resolution to reform your life.

For instance, if people living in wilful, unrepented sin; such as adultery, drunkenness, envy, hatred, lying, stealing, and the like; or even in lesser sins, persisted in, knowing that they are displeasing to God; if such were to come to the LORD'S Table, how could they expect a blessing? How could they hope to be welcome, whilst thus setting God at defiance? It were like the kiss of Judas, in the Garden of Gethsemane. Betraying JESUS to His enemies, whilst pretending to love Him.

But, if you be stedfastly purposed to lead a new and a better life, and determined to forsake sin and serve God more faithfully for the future; then draw near, and "take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort," and be sure you will not be rejected. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;

and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy on him, and unto our God, for He will abundantly pardon.”

The Prayer Book gives us very full directions as to our preparation for the Holy Communion ; and especially with regard to our Repentance. We are exhorted to examine our lives and conversations by the rule of God's Commandments ; and whereinsoever we shall perceive ourselves to have offended, either by will, word, or deed, to bewail our own sinfulness, and confess ourselves to Almighty God, with full purpose of amendment of life.

Furthermore, we are admonished that, as “it is requisite that no man should come to the Holy Communion, but with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience ;” if any one cannot “by this means quiet his own conscience, but requireth further comfort, or counsel ;” he is to seek God's Minister, the Priest, and open his grief to him. That so, he may receive “the benefit of Absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice ; to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness.”

Having spoken so fully of this in another place, I will not do more here than just call

your attention to it; and remind you of the provision which the Church has made for your comfort and support.

The *second* point the Catechism bids us examine ourselves upon is,

2. If we “ have a lively faith in God’s mercy through CHRIST, with a thankful remembrance of His Death.”

By meditation, or serious consideration of Divine Truths, the heart is kindled into loving faith and grateful love. Who can doubt God’s mercy who contemplates the wonderful abasement of the Incarnation? Who can remain unthankful who gazes on the agony of the Cross?

From highest Heaven th’ Eternal SON,
With GOD the FATHER ever one,
Came down to suffer, and to die;
For love of sinful man He bore
Our human grief and troubles sore,
Our load of guilt and misery.

In darkest shades of night we lay,
Without a beam to guide our way,
Or hope of aught beyond the grave;
But He hath brought us life and light,
And opened Heaven to our sight,
And lives for ever strong to save.¹

¹ Hymns, Ancient and Modern, No. 193.

A great Saint was used to say that there is no book, wherein man may learn such lessons of Faith and Love, as the Book of the Passion of JESUS CHRIST. Under the shadow of the Cross we perceive the goodness and long suffering of God, and the ingratitude of our manifold rebellions against Him.

On Calvary we see *what* the love of CHRIST for man is—and how indeed it is “as strong as death!” “Many waters cannot quench it; neither can the floods drown it!” Are not those sacred Wounds so many mouths which preach to us of mercy and of love?

“Looking unto JESUS, the Author and Finisher of our faith,” nailed upon the Cross; (that “Tree of life,” whose “leaves were for the healing of the nations;”) we shall learn at length to “crucify the flesh, with the affections, and lusts;” and to say with the Apostle, “I am crucified with CHRIST, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but CHRIST liveth in me.”

Only at the foot of the Cross can we in any measure realize the extent of God’s Mercy and CHRIST’S Love. “I sat me down under the shadow of Him, Whom my soul loveth, and His Fruit was sweet unto ~~my~~ taste.”

The *third* point on which we are to examine ourselves is this,

3. "Whether we be in charity with all men." Here again, we must come to our Blessed LORD, in His Passion, for instruction. Hear Him interceding for His very murderers, "FATHER, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" "Let the same mind be in you, which was also in CHRIST JESUS."

Search diligently into your heart, and see if you have this "charity;" without it, you cannot belong to the Prince of Peace, for you would not be like Him. "Let all bitterness and wrath—be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as GOD for CHRIST'S sake hath forgiven you." Eph. iv. 31, 32. "Avenge not yourselves." "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Revenge and bitterness of spirit are unworthy of a Christian. "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the LORD!" Dost thou think it hard, O man, to forgive thy brother his offences, "whereas the goodness of God endureth yet daily?"

No man may safely approach the Altar, with any unkind feeling in his heart towards his brother, for whom CHRIST died. "Therefore,

if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first, be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." S. Matt. v. 23, 24.

But the "charity" here spoken of implies *more* than forgiveness of injuries. Charity is love. We are "every one members one of another," and "one Body in CHRIST." All baptized Christians are one in JESUS CHRIST, and have an equal share in His Great Atonement. We are brethren in CHRIST; we should love each other for His sake, and because of our holy brotherhood in Him. "Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love;" "love one another with a pure heart fervently."

S. Paul tells us of some very blessed fruits of Christian charity, in the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians—"Charity suffereth long and is kind." "Charity envieth not," "vaunteth not itself," "seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;" "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." By such tests as these, we may know whether we are cultivating

this most excellent virtue in our souls. "Now abideth Faith, Hope, and Charity, these three; but the greatest of these is Charity."

It is love for God that begets love for man in the heart. All true and pure love has its root in Him, and springs forth from the deep Fountain of divine Charity. Love we JESUS CHRIST, and we shall love our brother for His sake; for we shall see JESUS in him.

Christian soul, hast thou ever considered what the Love of JESUS is? or thought how thou mayest best respond to it? Its length and breadth thou canst not measure! Its height and depth thou wilt not fathom! Its exceeding tenderness thou shalt in no wise conceive! Human love, at its very best, is but a faint picture—a shadow of that Love "which passeth knowledge," and can never change.

Hast thou ever been blest with a friend, dear to thee as thy very soul? Didst thou love him with an affection that seemed too deep and sacred for earth—that savoured of eternity? Was his presence so dear to thee, that absence from him was pain and separation, loneliness? Did his voice thrill through thy soul, and his tender sympathy sweeten all the cares and difficulties of life? Was his love the sunlight of

thy existence, and even apart from him, was his image ever present to thy mind? Didst thou love what he loved—ay, even those inanimate things which he had touched, or his eyes had rested on?

Real and true as such deep, fond love is—changing an existence, brightening a life, softening the very inmost heart; yet is it but human—a faint shadowing forth of Love divine. The Love of JESUS as far exceedeth such, as Heaven is high above the Earth. His Love is beyond all human powers of conception. It is itself the Source from which all true love flows, which should return again to Him, from Whom it springs, the never failing Fountain of all charity!

Human love, if it be pure and true, is indeed a blessed gift of God, and a sweet solace of the soul; but it can never satisfy *all* its yearnings. There will be ever in the depth of the heart, a longing for something better, and higher still, and that is Love divine. The soul was made to love God, and to be loved by Him; it will never find rest or peace until it fulfils the purposes for which God created it, and reposes in His love.

Divine Charity alone continueth ever at one

stay, is unchangeable, never grows cold, is never wearied, satisfies each craving, understands each longing, never disappoints. Seek we to love God *first*, and above all, then shall we love our brethren *in* Him. Then shall our charity, purified in the furnace of Divine Love, come forth like fine gold, bright and resplendent from the flames, and meet to be stored up in the Treasury of the King of kings.

O Love divine, how sweet thou art !

When shall I find my willing heart

All taken up with thee ?

I thirst, I faint, I die to prove

The greatness of redeeming love,

The love of CHRIST to me !

Stronger His Love than death or hell ;

Its riches are unsearchable ;

The first-born sons of light

Desire in vain its depths to see ;

They cannot read the mystery,

The length, and breadth, and height.

God only knows the love of God ;

O that it now were shed abroad

In this poor stony heart !

For love I sigh—for love I pine ;

This only portion, LORD, be mine,

Be mine this better part.¹

We have now considered the *three* points

¹ Hymns, Ancient and Modern, No. 199.

for self-examination for those who would approach the LORD'S Table. You will see that in each we must come to our Blessed LORD for instruction, and learn our lessons of Repentance, Faith, and Charity, at His sacred Feet.

As the great day draws nigh, excite in your heart an earnest longing for the coming of your Heavenly Guest, and be very "instant in prayer," beseeching the HOLY GHOST to dispose your soul for the reception of your GOD and SAVIOUR.


Imagine you hear JESUS CHRIST saying to you, "Prepare Me a lodging; for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you." Say often to yourself, "The great day is approaching, wherein my LORD will visit my soul!" "The Master calleth thee, O my soul, rise up and meet Him!" "Whence is this to me, that GOD should come unto a vile sinner like myself?"

Think often of what is going to happen to you; let it never be absent from your mind,—but let it occupy your thoughts night and day,—when you rise up, and when you lie down to rest. For indeed it will be the greatest event that will have happened to you since your Baptism, and you cannot make too much account of it, do what you may.

Pray for faith to discern JESUS in the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood. Ask Him to "increase" your faith, and to help your unbelief, that so you may see Him hidden under these earthly veils, though He be not visible to your bodily eyes. Beseech Him to prepare the dwelling-place of your soul for His abode ; and ask Him when once He has come to you, never to depart, but to abide with you for ever.

In a case of *first* Communion it is most desirable to consult the Priest, your minister, as to your fitness to approach the Altar, and you should leave it to him to decide the time of your doing so. Receive his advice with respect, and follow his instructions as best you may ; for 'in obeying and honouring him, you are really showing your devotion and reverence to God Almighty, Whose minister he is.

It will be a great assistance to you sometimes, to attend the service of the Holy Communion before you receive It, (if your clergyman have no objection to your doing so.) This would be an excellent preparation in every way ; you would get accustomed to the prayers, and so be less distracted on the day of your own Communion, and above all, you will find it a powerful means of obtaining those graces you



need. For there is nothing God will refuse you, for the good of your soul, that you ask, uniting your prayers with the spiritual Sacrifice of His dear SON'S Body and Blood.

Beseech God to forget your unworthiness, and to look only on the merits of His dearly beloved SON, and to unite your poor service with His perfect love and obedience. That so, out of the abundance of JESUS CHRIST, your poverty may be enriched, and your soul made fit to receive your LORD. Ask Him to grant that the precious Seed which shall so soon be sown therein, may bear fruit to life eternal.

Prayer to be used frequently before the receiving of the Holy Communion.

I do not presume to come to this Thy Table, O merciful LORD, trusting in my own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies.

I am not worthy to gather up the crumbs under Thy Table. But Thou art the same LORD, Whose property is always to have mercy. Grant me, therefore, gracious LORD, so to eat the Flesh of Thy dear SON, JESUS CHRIST, and to drink His Blood, that my sinful body may be made clean by His Body, and my soul washed through His most precious Blood, and that I

may evermore dwell in Him, and He in me
Amen.

“WHO is coming?” CHRIST thy SAVIOUR;
LORD of lords, Eternal King—
He, Who made and who upholdeth
By His might, each living thing—
At whose Name each knee should bow,
Lo, thy GOD is coming now!

“TO WHOM cometh One so mighty?
Is there king or prince so great,
Who this Heav'nly Guest can welcome,
And receive with fitting state?”
No, poor sinner—yet to thee
He would come, a Guest to be.

“WHEREFORE cometh CHRIST all glorious
Yet again to this cold earth?
Here He was of old rejected,
Counted as of little worth;
Wherefore cometh He again
To abide with sinful men?”

JESUS cometh to enrich thee
With the best that Heaven can give;
Giveth thee His precious Body,
That thou mayest eat and live;
Cometh in this humble guise,
That with Him thou mayest rise.

“What is man, most gracious SAVIOUR?
What is man, and what am I?
That Thy Love was not contented
Once upon the Cross to die;

But must come again to earth,
With such gifts of priceless worth.

“Wherefore if from Heaven He stoopeth,
Should CHRIST come to one so mean ?
Knows He not I am unworthy,
I am sinful and unclean ;
And have nothing meet to bring
As an offering to my King ?”

Well He knows it—yet, poor sinner,
At thy door the SAVIOUR stands,
Waiting till thou giv’st Him entrance,
Knocking with His piercèd Hands ;
Open wide the door, and pray
That He evermore may stay.

A.

CHAPTER V.

THE GREATEST EVENT IN OUR LIVES.

AND now the Great Day has at length arrived ;
—the morning has dawned, wherein the most
important event that ever happened to you in
your whole life will take place ; God Almighty,
your SAVIOUR and Redeemer, is coming to
make His abode in your soul, “ Go ye forth to
meet Him.” The King of Angels ; the LORD
of Heaven and earth ; the Creator of the uni-

verse will soon be your Guest. How can you best receive and entertain this Divine Visitor?

I will suppose that the more *remote* preparation has already been made—that you have duly “swept and garnished” your soul by repentance and its works—and made ready therein a dwelling-place for the Most High: that the fire of charity is kindled, and the flame of gratitude is burning, and your lamp ready trimmed against the coming of the Heavenly Bridegroom. But now it is a question of the more *immediate* preparation; for, behold, even now He is already at your door. The Master *is come*, and calleth for you.

Let us consider together the dignity of the Divine Guest. WHO it is that cometh—to WHOM He cometh—and WHEREFORE He cometh.

It is GOD Who cometh; the Almighty Who abases Himself to visit the abode of a poor sinner’s soul. He comes to bless: see His Hands are full of gifts, and overflowing with graces. If you are poor, He will be your riches; if you are ignorant, He will be your wisdom; if weak, your strength; if dejected, your exceeding joy and gladness; if weary, your rest. Herein may we perceive how Christians have gained by the Incarnation, and *how*

we, "who sometime were afar off, are made nigh by the Blood of CHRIST." Eph. ii. 13.

In the days of old, God dwelt in the high and holy Place, and though, even then, He condescended "to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones," and to comfort them with His Presence—yet did He never stoop so low as to inhabit the very souls of men. Hear Him speaking by the mouth of His Prophet, "Heaven is My Throne, and earth is My footstool; what House will ye build Me? saith the LORD, or what is the place of My rest?"

But now, how changed, how mercifully, how wonderfully changed, is all! How near are poor weak sinners brought to GOD Almighty by the Cross and Passion—the adorable Wounds, the Sacred Blood of JESUS CHRIST! "If any man love Me," saith our Blessed LORD, "My FATHER will love him, and WE will come unto him, and make OUR abode with him." "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him."

From the eve of your Communion, be diligent, as far as in you lies, to put aside all other thoughts, save of Him, Whom you are about to receive into your soul. Be earnest in prayer

to God, that this approach to His Altar may be for your eternal benefit, and that the good Seed, which will there be sown in your soul may bear fruit a hundred-fold. Beg Him to clothe you with the Righteousness of His Own Beloved SON, that so, when you come to this Heavenly Banquet, you may be found adorned with that "wedding garment," in which the Great King would have His guests attired, and without which they can never be welcome at the "Marriage Supper of the Lamb." Beseech Him to receive you favourably, and bless you for JESUS' sake.

Consider that it is the Great God, the Holy One, Who made you, and Who upholds you by His Almighty Arm, Who invites you to this sacred Feast of Love; that He will feed you with the "Living Bread," which alone can nourish your soul to all eternity; even with His dear SON'S most precious Body and Blood: that from henceforth you will no longer live by yourself, but JESUS CHRIST will live in you, and be with you always, and never let you be lonely any more, unless by sin you force Him to depart. Lie down to sleep with such thoughts as these, and let your last words be, "Amen! Even so; come, LORD JESUS."

Rise early, and let your first thought, on awaking, be of Him, Who is about to be your Guest. Imagine you hear Him calling you by name, saying, "Make haste, for to-day I must abide at thy house."

Speak little, and avoid everything that would be likely to distract your mind. If possible, choose an early hour for your Communion, that It may be the first food you receive that day.

Try to be in church some time before the service begins, that so you may be able to collect your thoughts, and fix them all upon your LORD and SAVIOUR.

Leave all your worldly cares and anxieties, if you can, outside the church door, and if you are not able so to dispose of your sorrows and heart-aches, cast them all at JESUS' feet, and beseech Him to help you to bear them patiently and cheerfully. "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you."

At the end of this tract, you will find a few prayers and meditations, which may be used, both before and after the Holy Communion, as opportunity may offer.

Join, as well as you can, in the service, and try to place yourself at the foot of the Cross,

and to behold with the eyes of your soul **JESUS** hanging thereon.

At the **LORD'S PRAYER**, beg Him to establish His kingdom in your soul—to come and reign in your heart—to give you grace to do His will—to forgive you all your sins, and to feed you with the Bread of Life.

At the **COMMANDMENTS**, think, with sorrow, of the many times you have offended God, and broken His holy Laws, and beg Him to have mercy upon you, for **JESUS CHRIST'S** sake.

Listen devoutly to the **EPISTLE** and **GOSPEL**, as to God's Voice speaking to you, and instructing you in the way of eternal life.

If there be a **SERMON**, give reverent attention to God's minister, and beg your Heavenly **FATHER** to bless the words of His servant to your soul's benefit.

At the "**OFFERTORY**," (when the alms are collected) give what you can to Him, Who did not reject the widow's mite; but above all, offer Him your heart, and beg Him, for the sake of the great Sacrifice of the Cross, to accept you a poor sinner, and to bring you to everlasting rest.

At the prayer for the "**CHURCH MILITANT here in earth**," forget not to pray for all who

are in sickness or sorrow,—and to remember the faithful departed ; beseeching God to give them rest, and to bring you, and those you love, with them, to His Heavenly Kingdom.

Then comes the “ EXHORTATION,” as it is called ; during the reading of which, lament your own unworthiness and want of preparation, and pray God to enable you to partake of all the benefits of CHRIST’S sacred Death and Passion, and to receive this holy Sacrament to your comfort and salvation.

Join humbly in the CONFESSIO of sins which follows, and pray GOD to give you a full and perfect ABSOLUTION.

Imagine the “ COMFORTABLE WORDS” to be spoken to you by JESUS CHRIST Himself (as, in fact, they are by the mouth of His minister), how full of love, and consolation they are ! “ Come unto Me, all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.” ‘ LORD, I come to Thee, from Whom I have long strayed—receive me again, and bless me, for I will never more depart from Thee, Who art my everlasting Joy and Rest !’

And now, lift up your heart, “ for the coming of the LORD draweth nigh ;” and “ with angels and archangels” praise God and give

Him thanks for that most precious Gift which He has given mankind in **JESUS CHRIST** our **LORD**.

The Prayer which immediately precedes the "**PRAYER OF CONSECRATION**," beginning, "we do not presume to come to this Thy Table," you will already have become familiar with.

And now the awful but happy moment has at length arrived, when **GOD** your **SAVIOUR** will bless you with His Presence. Kneel low, as the Priest repeats the words of **CONSECRATION**, which convert the bread and wine, into the **Body and Blood of your LORD**. "**THIS IS MY BODY!**" "**THIS IS MY BLOOD!**" For at those sacred words—The King of Angels descends from Heaven, after a most *real*, though spiritual and hidden fashion, and veils His adorable Divinity under these poor, mean, earthly forms. Adore Him the hidden **GOD**, in this tremendous Mystery, which exceedeth all power of human comprehension, and as you must altogether fail to conceive it, be content to worship and to believe.

I believe whate'er the **SON of GOD** hath told,
What the Truth hath spoken, that for truth I hold.

Behold Him with the eye of Faith—the

GOD-MAN, enthroned upon His Holy Altar, and encircled by the Heavenly Hosts ;—who are filled with wonder and amazement, as they contemplate, and marvel at the loving condescension and abasement of their God. Listen to them as they sing His Praises, and unite with them in blessing Him, Who can stoop so low to raise up sinners from the dust.

Holy—Holy—Holy !

LORD GOD ALMIGHTY ;

Heaven and Earth are full of Thy Glory ;

Glory be to Thee, O LORD most High !

Do not rise from your knees, till it is your turn to go up to the Altar to receive the Food of Life. Never forget that you are in the immediate Presence of God, and behave as you would if you could actually see Him with your bodily eyes, in all His Power and Majesty. Whilst you are waiting, occupy yourself with such aspirations as these—or with some of the Prayers which you will find at the end of this book.

‘Hail ! sacred Body of JESUS, Food of life and immortality ! Preserve my body and soul to everlasting life.’

‘Hail ! Precious Blood, That floweth forth from JESUS’ side, to cleanse away the sins of

a whole world! Wash me from all my sinful stains.'

'May the partaking of this most holy Feast, O GOD, be to me the beginning of an eternal union with my SAVIOUR!'

'What am I, LORD? a vile worm and miserable sinner! And what art Thou! The LORD GOD Almighty!'

'O LORD, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under the roof of my soul—but speak the word, and Thy servant shall be made whole.'

'Whence is this to *me*, that GOD my SAVIOUR should come to visit me?'

'Thou hast loved me and given Thyself for me, O LORD—what shall I give Thee in return for this inestimable Gift? LORD, I will give Thee my heart—accept it with all its best affections, for it is Thine and Thine only!'

'LORD, what is man that Thou art so mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou thus visitest him?'

'Behold, O GOD, the Wounds of Thy dear SON lie open before Thee; I pray Thee let my sins be covered.'

'O my GOD, receive this Great Sacrifice which we offer to Thy Divine Majesty, and

accept us in the Beloved; even in Thy dear SON JESUS CHRIST. Let His sacred Blood cry to Thee for mercy. Have regard to the needs of Thy whole Church—give rest to the departed—strengthen those who are yet fighting against sin—comfort the broken hearted—raise up those who mourn—pity and succour all who are in sickness, or trouble, or anguish of heart—bless those I love, especially [*Here pray for those who are bound to you by the ties of love, or relationship, and mention their needs*] and ‘bless me, even me also, O my FATHER!’

This is the moment to ask of God any *particular* favour—such as grace to overcome some fault, or to acquire some virtue, which you feel you need—the health of one you love—or some blessing they are in want of—offering up your prayers in union with the Great Sacrifice of the Cross.

If you cannot keep on praying—kneel quietly and respectfully at JESUS’ Feet—saying, from time to time, ‘LORD, I am not worthy—but Thou canst make me worthy.’

‘LORD, I desire to love Thee—pour Thy Love into my heart.’

When your turn comes to go up to the

Altar, clasp your hands together, and bow your head, and approach your LORD with a lively Faith and deep reverence; and beseech Him to make Himself known to you in the "Breaking of Bread." Could your eyes be opened, to behold the hidden realities of the spiritual world, you would see JESUS in all His Beauty and Majesty, waiting to receive and to embrace you.

Kneel down on the altar step, in the first vacant place, and wait in stillness and awe for the sacred moment, when the Priest shall come to you with the BODY of your LORD.

Hold out your right hand, and receive It with the deepest reverence into the open palm—and raise It to your mouth—being careful not to let one crumb fall to the ground.

Say in your inmost heart, 'Amen, LORD JESUS! possess me wholly—abide with me eternally—make me all Thine own!'

In like manner when the Chalice is brought to you, with your dear LORD'S Precious BLOOD; take the "Cup of Salvation" firmly into your hands, and raise It to your lips, beseeching GOD to wash your soul in CHRIST'S most Sacred Blood.

Then return to your seat, and remain kneel-

ing till the end of the Service—for now the desire of your heart is indeed fulfilled—the happy, mysterious moment has come, when JESUS your LORD and SAVIOUR reposes in your soul. He is now all yours, and you are all His. Oh, blissful moment! when the soul at length possesses JESUS, and is taken close to His loving Heart, and reposes, like the Beloved Disciple, upon His sacred Bosom!

Who may tell the exceeding blessedness of that divine Resting-Place, the very foretaste as It is of the Rest and Joy of Heaven? Even those who have experienced the happiness of this unearthly union with their SAVIOUR, cannot express their feelings. They know that It satisfies every yearning and longing of their souls—and leaves them nothing to desire—they feel strangely refreshed, and the Peace of God is shed abroad in their hearts, but their joy is too deep for words.

Oh, blessed sorrows and trials of this earthly life which *oblige* souls to go to JESUS for comfort! Oh, happy bereavements, and merciful heart-rendings which send us to our LORD for consolation! who may deplore or regret them? who may grudge them even to those they love most tenderly, when they bring so rich a reward?

Art thou bowed down by grief, O my soul, or crushed by sorrows, or wounded by disappointment? Hasten to JESUS, and He will give thee rest. Has thy Heavenly FATHER ordered thy lot amidst sickness, or in sharp pain, or in pinching poverty? Hast thou come to learn, with bitter anguish, that those whom thou lovest on earth cannot satisfy thee; will not sympathize with thee; are unable to understand thee, and fail to return thee that deep affection which thou bestowest upon them? or has it pleased God in the wise and loving dispensations of His Providence, to remove from thee one who was dearer to thee than life itself, and left thee lonely and desolate, so that a cloud has seemed to darken thine existence, and to gather over and obscure all thy life's joy?

Then go to JESUS in the most sweet and blessed Communion of His Love. Though earthly consolation has failed thee, yet will He never fail thee, and never change towards thee, for with Him is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Hasten to His Feet, and cast thyself down there. He will raise thee up and fold thee to His Bosom. He will encircle thee with His Divine Arms,—and so, resting on His Heart, thou wilt forget all thy sorrows,

and rise up above thine anguish of spirit, until thou shalt be able to exclaim in very truth, "Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee!"

"Nearer, my GOD, to Thee,
 Nearer to Thee;
 E'en though it be a Cross
 That raiseth me!
 Still all my song shall be,
 Nearer, my GOD, to Thee,
 Nearer to Thee."

None can comfort as JESUS can. None can sympathize, or feel for thee as He can. No earthly consolation can be compared to that which our dear LORD will give. He will wipe away thy tears. He will bind up those wounds which smart so sorely. He will heal thy broken heart. It may be, that He will not all at once remove thy grief, because He knows it to be the root of eternal and never-ending joy. But He will teach thee, and help thee so to bear it, that it shall prove a blessing, and He will lighten it with hope.

As thou liest on His Bosom, weary with thy struggles, and longing for repose, He will give thee to discern in the far distance the gates of

the heavenly City, wherein thou shalt one day find thine everlasting rest. Pray we that our sorrows, those billows of the stormy ocean of this present life, may never overwhelm our souls, or drown us in despair, but may cast us on the Rock of Ages, where we may find safety, and all our struggles cease.

As you kneel in your place, awaiting the conclusion of the Service,—contemplate CHRIST in your heart—and beseech Him to teach you lessons of wisdom and love. Say to Him, with deep affection and devotion, “Despise not Thou, O LORD, the poor abode of my soul, but abide with me for ever.” Imagine you hear JESUS saying to you, in accents of the deepest tenderness, “My child, if thou art willing to be with Me, I am willing to be with thee;” and answer Him gladly, “LORD, I will be Thine for all eternity. I pray Thee never to depart from me!”

If you have time, you may repeat the “Te Deum” out of the Prayer Book, beginning “We praise Thee, O GOD: we acknowledge Thee to be the LORD.” Or some other hymn of praise and thanksgiving.

Join devoutly in the prayers which conclude *the Service*. At the hymn or canticle which

precedes the final Benediction, beginning, "Glory be to God on high," believe that the blessed Saints and Angels, and all those holy ones "not lost, but gone before," the faithful departed, who have lived and died in the LORD, take up the strain, and echo your songs of praise on earth. For we are told that they "rest not day and night" from their hymns of thanksgiving, saying, "Alleluia! salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the LORD our God!"

When you return home, and for the remainder of the day, endeavour to be quiet and recollected, and to entertain your Divine Visitor with due reverence. You have never before had *such* a Guest.

Say continually to Him, "Abide with me, LORD; depart not from me, for Thou art my Salvation!" And with Jacob of old, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me!" Beseech Him to bring you to that Heavenly Feast, in His eternal Kingdom, where the Redeemed shall enjoy everlasting joy and felicity, and where He Who was here their Food, shall be there, the eternal Crown of rejoicing to all the faithful.

If you cannot *feel* all you would, or *realize*

the blessed Presence of JESUS in your soul; if you be cold, and dry, and hard, as regards your own feelings, in spite of the great Blessing you have received; be not dismayed,—only believe;—and pray GOD to soften your heart, and to melt it into loving devotion. If you ask Him, He will increase your faith, and enable you to see the “King in His Beauty,” enthroned in your soul. Beseech Him also to shut the door against all intruders, that so your Heavenly Guest may not be disturbed, and may reign in your heart supreme.

Be not content with *one* Communion only. You cannot live without JESUS, and you must continually invite Him into your soul, and constrain Him to abide with you; both to give you grace to walk in the way of His Commandments, and to bless your daily life.

Ask GOD to allow you, in spirit, to form one of that holy household at Nazareth, where Blessed Mary, and Saintly Joseph dwelt ever in the Presence of JESUS, storing up all His precious Words in their hearts. Remember how distressed they were, when for a brief season they lost Him. How eagerly they sought after Him; how joyfully they found Him. *Follow* their most blessed example;—whilst

you possess JESUS, entertain Him well, and strive to retain Him—if you should have the misfortune to lose Him, seek Him diligently, and rest not till you have found Him. When you have found Him, cleave to Him so closely that He may never leave you again.

As you are liable to fall daily, so have you need to be daily renewed. He that attempteth to walk through the wilderness of this world, without JESUS for his Guide and his Support, will find to his cost that he is like “one that gropeth his way in darkness,” he will be ever stumbling, and ever going astray from the right road, and will never reach his heavenly Home.

The more you come to know JESUS, the more you will love Him, and desire Him, and discern His beauty. So will you be able to say with all the affections of your heart, “My God and *all* things to me!” for He will indeed be your All in all.

And now, dear readers, farewell. We have “communed together and reasoned” of many sacred things, and of many great and holy Truths. If God, in His mercy, bless any of my poor words to your eternal welfare, to Him be the praise; for myself I ask only, of your charity, to be remembered in your prayers.

May He guide us all through the wilderness of this world, nor let the "barrel of meal waste, or the cruse of oil fail," till we come to that promised land "flowing with milk and honey." Then we shall no longer "see through a glass darkly," but "face to face;" no more need faith to discern the things of the unseen world, for we shall know, even as also we are known.

CHRIST is coming to His altar
 In the holy Church to-day;
 I am going there to meet Him,
 To adore Him, and to pray.

He is coming from His glory,
 Mary's Son, our GOD Most High;
 He, Who once vouchsaf'd for sinners
 On the bitter Cross to die.

He is coming—from Whose Presence
 Heaven and earth shall flee away,
 When the quick and dead are summon'd
 On the dreadful Judgment Day.

He is coming, and the Angels,
 Who in Heav'n His praises sing,
 Will be there to do Him honour,
 Like the courtiers round a king.

I am going forth to meet Him—
 I shall be to CHRIST as near
 As the blind, and sick, and hungry
 Whom He fed and heal'd when here.

Nearer yet—I shall receive Him,
CHRIST, my LORD, within my soul ;
He will enter in and dwell there,
He will feed and make me whole.

Though I shall not see my SAVIOUR,
Nor His Voice of mercy hear,
Yet I know by faith His Presence
Surer than by eye or ear.

For GOD'S promise standeth certain,
And the Word of Truth hath said,
CHRIST'S own Body there is present
In the consecrated Bread.

And the holy "Cup of Blessing"
Is His Blood for sinners shed ;
Offering of Almighty power
For the living and the dead.

Miracle of lowly mercy !
Higher than our thoughts can soar !
Prostrate, LORD, I bow before Thee,
And Thy Presence I adore.

Well Thou knowest, LORD, Thy servant,
Knowest that I am not meet
To approach Thy holy altar,
Or to worship at Thy feet.

From Thy holiness and glory
Such as I might stand aloof,
But Thou biddest me prepare Thee
Lodging 'neath my humble roof.

For my strength'ning and salvation,
 Thou to visit me dost deign—
 Blessèd LORD! my heart is ready,
 Enter there, I pray, and reign.

A.

 DEVOTIONS BEFORE HOLY COMMUNION.

O LORD my GOD, do Thou prevent Thy servant with the blessings of Thy goodness, that I may be enabled to approach worthily and devoutly to Thy glorious Sacrament.

Stir up my heart toward Thee, and kindle my affections, that so I may taste Thy love, which lieth plentifully hid in this Sacrament, as in a fountain.

Enlighten also mine eyes to behold so great a Mystery, and strengthen me with undoubting faith to believe it. For it is Thy work, and no human power; Thy sacred Institution, not man's invention.

O LORD, in the simplicity of my heart, with a firm faith, and at Thy command, I draw near to Thee in this Thy blessed Sacrament. With hope and reverence, believing truly that Thou art here present, both God and man.

LORD, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief! Whatsoever is wanting in me, O merciful JESU, do Thou Thyself of Thy great goodness supply,

and give me those fitting dispositions which Thou requirest in those who approach Thine altar to receive the blessed Food of Life, even Thine own most precious Body and Blood.

“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” These are Thine own words, O LORD; but who am I, that I should presume to approach unto Thee? or to bring Thee into the house of my soul? Behold, the Heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee—how shall there be found room for Thee in the narrow abode of my poor soul? Angels and Archangels stand in awe of Thee, holy and righteous men fear Thee; what am I that I should come into Thy sacred Presence? How shall a poor sinner dare to entertain, not an Angel, but the LORD of Angels Himself!

Nevertheless, in confidence of Thy goodness and mercy, I draw nigh unto Thee, as a sick person to the Great Physician, as one hungry and thirsty to the Fountain of Life, as a needy wretch to the King of Heaven, a servant to his Lord, a creature to the Creator, a desolate soul to the most tender of Comforters.

Thou knowest, LORD, that in me dwelleth no good thing, but Thou hast bidden me to come to Thee, and I obey Thy commandment.

Accept me, Thine unworthy servant, Thy poor, weak, sinful child ; send me not away empty, to wander through the wilderness of this world, lest I faint by the way. Make glad this day the heart of Thy servant, for unto Thee do I lift up my soul. Admit me to this sweet Feast which Thou hast prepared for the poor and needy.

It is true that Thou art the Holy of Holies, and I the poorest of sinners ; and yet Thou commandest me to come unto Thee, and be fed with Angels' meat, even with the " Living Bread," which came down from Heaven to give life to the world.

Remove from me, O God, all that is displeasing to Thee, or that in any way hinders Thee from taking up Thy abode in my soul. Wash away my sins in Thy most sacred Blood, clothe me with Thy righteousness, and receive me to the kiss of peace.

Oh, my LORD and SAVIOUR, is it indeed true that Thou dost so humble and abase Thyself, as to offer Thyself unto us Thy poor unworthy creatures, in a little Bread and Wine, to be our spiritual Food and Sustenance ? Happy they to whom Thou revealest Thyself, and to whom, by Thy grace, it is given to discern Thee under these earthly veils. May I know Thee, O my
• GOD, in the breaking of bread.

Let me shut out the whole world and think only of Thee. Thou knowest mine infirmities, and the necessities I endure; my sins and my short-comings, my sorrows and my trials, are alike known unto Thee. I speak to Thee, before Whom all things lie naked and bare, and from Whom even our very inmost thoughts are not hid.

Thou knowest what good things I stand in most need of, both for body and soul, and how poor I am in all virtue. Behold, I stand before Thee naked and destitute—seeking grace, and imploring mercy. Refresh my hungry soul: comfort my heart, O LORD; inflame my coldness with Thy Love; enlighten my blindness with the brightness of Thy Presence—send me not away to wander alone upon the earth—hungry and thirsty, weary and desolate, with none to succour me.

Hold me up with Thy Divine Arm, that my footsteps slip not. Stoop down to the depth of my nothingness, and draw me up to Thee; for unless Thou comest down to me, I can never ascend up to Thee.

Lo! I cast myself at Thy Sacred Feet, and beseech Thee to grant me grace to approach Thee with reverence and godly fear, that so at the last Day I may behold Thee without fear.

Cleanse my heart to receive Thee, and dwell in me whom Thou hast so cleansed. Pour Thy Love into my heart, and unite me so closely with Thyself, that I may never be parted from Thee, in time or eternity; and grant that this Communion of Thy Body and Blood, which I, a poor unworthy sinner, purpose to receive, may be to me a foretaste of that heavenly Banquet, "the marriage Supper of the LAMB."

Psalm lxxxiv.

Collects.

O LORD, we beseech Thee, visit and cleanse our consciences, that Thy SON our LORD JESUS CHRIST may, when He cometh, find in us a dwelling-place prepared for Him, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the HOLY GHOST, ever one GOD, world without end. Amen.

O GOD, Who art Love! He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in Thee. I desire to receive Thee in this Sacrament, that I may be united to Thee more closely in the bond of love. Who shall separate me from the love of JESUS CHRIST? O may nothing be able to do that, neither life, nor death, nor any accident, nor any creature! My GOD and my all! Amen.

Prayer.

O JESU, SAVIOUR of the world ! Who camest to save sinners, and to bring them to eternal life ; lo, I come to Thee, from Whom I have strayed, like a lost sheep, for I know that with Thee there is plenteous redemption. Thou art indeed the Good Shepherd, Who didst lay down Thy life for Thy sheep, and Who camest to seek and to save that which was lost ; seek Thy servant, O LORD, for I do not forget Thy commandments.

I come to Thee pierced with many wounds, grievously oppressed with many evil passions ; but, LORD, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean. Thou knowest that it is the sick who need a Physician. But Thou art that good Samaritan, the true Physician of souls, Who hast borne our griefs, and carried our sicknesses ; Thou art He Who givest, as the medicine for our souls, the Sacrament of Thy precious Body and Blood.

Have mercy upon me, O LORD, and heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. A troubled spirit is a sacrifice to Thee—a broken and contrite heart Thou wilt not despise. I offer these first to Thee, that so I may the more

safely offer the Sacrifice of Thy holy Body and Blood. Accept me in the Beloved, O my God, and for His sake cast me not out. Amen.

Unto Thy Holy Altar, LORD,
 With heads and hearts bow'd low ;
 Where Thou art most to be ador'd
 We come, Thy grace to know.

Wearied and wounded in our strife
 With Satan, and with sin,
 We come to Thee—the Bread of Life,
 New strength and hope to win.

We do not ask *how* it can be
 That Thou Thyself shouldst give
 Into our hands and hearts—but we
 Receive Thee there—and live.

O dwell within us when we turn
 Back on our earthly way,
 And may we by Thy Presence learn
 To love Thee more each day.

E.

DEVOTIONS FOR THE TIME OF HOLY COMMUNION.

To be used, if time will allow, AFTER the "Prayer of Consecration," and before going up to the Altar.

Prostrate I adore Thee, Deity unseen,
 Who Thy glory hidest 'neath these shadows mean.

Lo, to Thee surrender'd, my whole heart is bow'd.
 'Tranc'd as it beholds Thee, shrin'd within the cloud.

Sight, and touch, and taste, are all in Thee deceived,
'Tis the hearing only safely is believed.

'Twas the Godhead only on the Cross was veil'd,
Here the Manhood also is from sight concealed.

Both alike believing, Thee one CHRIST I own,
Suing like the robber, at Thy mercy's Throne.

Thy dread Wounds, like Thomas, though I cannot see,
His be my confession, LORD and GOD, of Thee.

LORD, my faith unfeigned, evermore increase,
Give me hope unfading, love that cannot cease.

Oh, memorial wondrous of the LORD's own Death!
Living Bread, that givest all Thy creatures breath!

Grant my spirit ever by Thy Life may live,
To my taste Thy sweetness never-failing give.

Pelican most tender, Thine own children's Food,
Cleanse my heart's uncleanness with Thy precious Blood.

Lo, one drop, dear JESUS, all the world could save,
From sin's foul pollution all creation lave.

JESU, Who now veiled, I by faith descry,
What my soul doth thirst for, do not, LORD, deny,

That Thy Face unveiled, I at length may see,
With the blissful vision blest, my GOD, of Thee!

O Heavenly FATHER! I beseech Thee to
look upon the Face of Thine Anointed, and
for His sake to have mercy upon me. Behold
in Thy dear SON what may move Thee to com-
passionate Thy poor servant, and whereas my

sinful flesh hath provoked Thee to anger, let the Flesh of Thy SON JESUS CHRIST move Thee to pity.

Receive, O holy FATHER! Almighty, Everlasting God! this Spotless Sacrifice, which I, Thine unworthy servant, join in offering up to Thee for my many sins and manifold transgressions, and for the needs and necessities of the whole Catholic Church; and especially for those who are near and dear to me (*here remember before God those who have asked your prayers, and for whom you desire to pray.*) Regard the Merits of Thy Beloved SON, consider His Righteousness, remember His Sufferings; His stripes, and humiliation, the purple robe of scorn, the crown of thorns, the bloody sweat, the wounds, the cross, the anguish, and the painful death. For His sake, accept me, and all those I pray for, and bless us.

Give strength to the living, give rest to the departed, comfort those who mourn, raise up those who have fallen. Heal the sick, console the broken-hearted, fulfil the desires of all men to their eternal salvation. And this for His sake, Whose most sacred Body and Blood now calls to Thee for mercy, and Who ever liveth to make intercession for us.

Look upon the Face of Thine Anointed. The Spotless Victim, sprinkled not with the blood of others, but with His own Blood. The Lamb without spot ; Who did no sin, but bore the sins of the whole world, with Whose stripes we are healed.

O FATHER of mercies, and GOD of all comfort ! I offer up to Thee Thy well-beloved SON, in Whom Thou art well pleased. May I be ever united to Him, that so Thou mayest regard me favourably for His sake ! Grant, that through Him, I may obtain all those graces and blessings, which of myself I am not worthy to ask.

Hail, true Body, born of Mary !
Victim true, of true maid born ;
Thrill'd with true pains, hanging weary
On the Cross for man forlorn.

Whose pierc'd Side for our Salvation,
Did with true Blood overflow !
Foretaste of Thy consolation,
In death's trial may we know.

“ Unto Thee lift I up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the Heavens.”

“ Comfort the soul of Thy servant, O LORD, for unto Thee do I lift up my soul.”

Bless and sanctify, O God, the poor abode

of my soul, that it may become Thy Holy Habitation, and the seat of Thine eternal Glory—and cast out all, I pray Thee, which would offend the eyes of Thy Divine Majesty.

Come in, O LORD, unto me, I beseech Thee, and dwell with me for evermore. Amen.

PRAYERS AND THANKSGIVINGS AFTER HOLY
COMMUNION.

Behold, O LORD, I have Thee now, Who hast all things. I possess Thee, Who possessest all things, and canst do all things! O my God and my All! wean my heart, I beseech Thee, from all things that are not in Thee, for truly they are but vanity, and vexation of spirit, and can never satisfy the desires of my soul. On Thee alone do I desire to fix the affections of my heart. In Thee would I rest, for Thou alone art the Great Treasure, the Sovereign Truth, the Fulness of Joy—the Peace that passeth understanding—the eternal never-ending Rest!

Make me, Holy JESUS, to taste the sweetness of Thy Presence within my soul—shut the gate of my heart against all intruders—let me never more seek for joy or pleasure out of Thee. Thou art the Great Physician of souls

—heal my soul, O LORD, for I have sinned against Thee. Thou art the Good Shepherd, Who didst lay down Thy Life for Thy sheep. Behold, I am that sheep which was lost, and yet dost Thou vouchsafe to feed me with Thy Body and Blood ; lay me now upon Thy Shoulders, what wilt Thou refuse me, Who hast given Thyself to be my Food ?

Abide with me, O LORD, and I shall lack nothing, for Thou foldest me in a green pasture, and leadest me forth beside the waters of comfort ; and hast promised one day to bring me to the eternal Pastures of Thy Heavenly Kingdom.

Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without Thee I cannot live ;
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without Thee, I dare not die.

O true Light, that lightens every man that cometh into the world, lighten mine eyes that I sleep not in death !

O Fire, continually burning and never failing, behold, how lukewarm and cold I am ; inflame my heart with Thy love ; give me understanding, and kindle my affections that I may know and do Thy will.

Thou art the Lamb of God, Who takest

away the sins of the world; take from me whatever hurteth me and displeaseth Thee, and give me what Thou knowest will be pleasing to Thee and good for me.

Bless the LORD, O my soul! and let all that is within me praise His Holy Name.

Bless the LORD, O my soul! and forget not all His Benefits, who forgiveth all thy sins, and, by virtue of this most Blessed Sacrament, healeth all thine infirmities.

Soul of CHRIST, sanctify me!

Body of CHRIST, save me!

Blood of CHRIST, refresh me!

Water from the Side of CHRIST, cleanse me!

Passion of CHRIST, comfort me!

O Good JESU! hear me!

Hide me within Thy Wounds—never let me be separated from Thee!

From the malicious Enemy defend me! In the hour of death call me!

And bid me come to Thee, that with Thy Saints I may praise Thee, for ever and ever. Amen.

“Abide with me, LORD, I fear mine own unsteadfastness; abide with me, for the foe is strong, and I, through my sins, am weak. Be

Thou my strength. The world would lead me from Thee; abide with me, LORD, and be my Joy. Troubles and sorrows try my endurance, abide with me, LORD, and bear them *in* me, as Thou didst once bear them *for* me."

"Be Thou my Refreshment in weariness; my Comfort in trouble; my Refuge in temptation; in death my Life; in Judgment my Redeemer!" "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; Thy Rod and Thy Staff they shall comfort me."

V. Let all Thy works praise Thee, O LORD:

R. And Thy Saints give thanks unto Thee.

V. Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us:

R. But to Thy Name give the glory.

O GOD, who didst to the three Children soothe the flames of fire, mercifully grant that the flames of sin may not kindle upon me Thy servant! Amen.

I render Thee thanks, O GOD, for having thus so graciously fed me, Thy poor unworthy servant, with the precious Body and Blood of Thy dear SON. I pray Thee to grant that this Sacred Communion may intercede for me to my pardon and salvation—and that Thou wouldest vouchsafe to bring me, a sinner, to that Blessed Feast in Heaven—where with

Thy Saints, I may feed eternally upon the Bread of Life—and enjoy in Thy Presence, O ever Blessed and adorable Trinity, everlasting Joy and Rest! through the Merits and Sacrifice of JESUS CHRIST, my most dear LORD and SAVIOUR. Amen.

HYMN AFTER RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION.

O GOD, most Glorious and most High,
 Inhabiting eternity ;
 Whose Name is Holy—can it be,
 That Thou dost deign to dwell in me ?

LORD, what am I, that Thou should'st come,
 Into my heart to seek a home ;
 Bidding Thy servant taste and prove,
 How sweet Thy Sacramental Love ?

For here the eye of faith descries,
 At once the Priest and Sacrifice ;
 The spotless Lamb, th' incarnate LORD,
 The Richness of the House of GOD.

When kneeling at Thy Sacred Board,
 The broken Bread, the Wine outpour'd,
 Convey, Oh, wondrous Mystery,
 Thy Body, and Thy Blood to me.

Oh, may that Blood, yet warm within,
 My soul and body cleanse from sin ;
 Henceforth unhallow'd dreams give place,
 To workings of Almighty grace.

But I am weak—the Foe is strong—
The time is short—the way is long—
My own unsteadfastness I fear,
LORD, give me strength to persevere.

By Thy indwelling Presence blest,
Oh, may that Presence be my rest ;
Teaching my vain, unquiet heart,
To realize how sweet Thou art.

Possess my heart—absorb my soul—
Each impulse, each desire control ;
That seeking nothing out of Thee,
Thou mayest, O LORD, my Portion be.

T.

END OF PART V.









